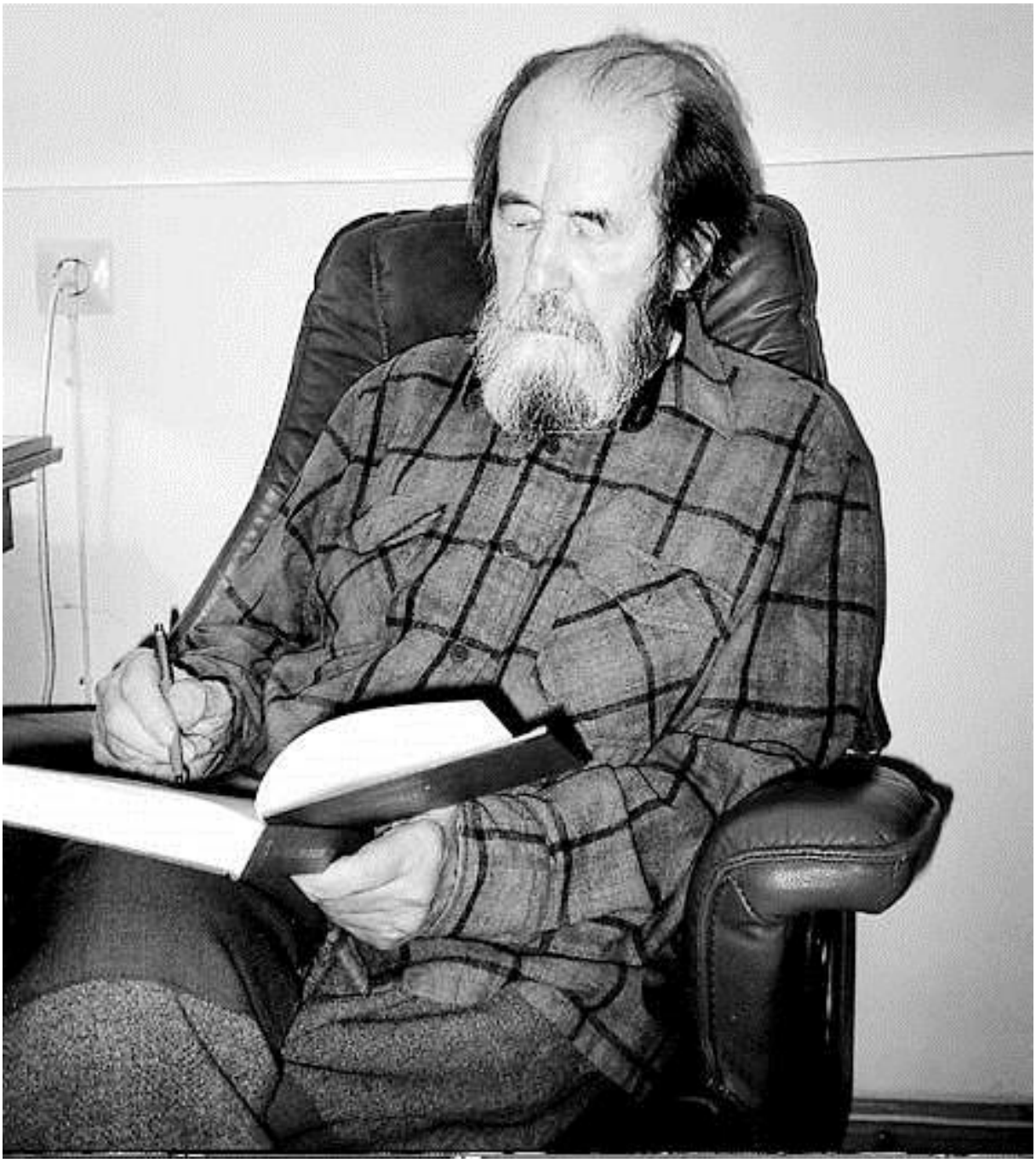

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

200 Years Together

Russo-Jewish History

Note: All censored chapters have been added to this PDF.

Volume 1 - The Jews before the Revolution:

Ch. 1 Before the 19th century (translated by R. Butler and J. Harris)
~~Ch. 2 During the reign of Alexander I~~
~~Ch. 3 During the reign of Nicholas I~~
Ch. 4 During the period of reforms
Ch. 5 After the murder of Alexander II
~~Ch. 6 In the Russian revolutionary movement~~
~~Ch. 7 The birth of Zionism~~
~~Ch. 8 At the turn of the 20th century~~
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Volume 2 - The Jews in the Soviet Union:

Ch. 13 The February Revolution
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Ch. 16 During the Civil War
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Ch. 23 Before the Six-Day War
Ch. 24 Breaking away from Bolshevism
Ch. 25 Accusing Russia
Ch. 26 The beginning of Exodus
Ch. 27 About the assimilation. Author's afterword

Abridged Mentions of the Main Sources Cited in Notes by the Author

“22”
: Social, political and literary review of the Jewish intelligentsia from the USSR in Israel, Tel Aviv. The bibliographic notes called by a number are from the author. Of these, those marked with an asterisk refer to a second-hand reference. The explanatory notes marked with an asterisk are translators.

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BJWR-2
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Chapter 1: Before the 19th century

From the Beginnings in Khazaria

[G13] In this book the presence of the Jews in Russia prior to 1772 will not be discussed in detail. However, for a few pages we want to remember the older epochs.

One could begin, that the paths of Russians and Jews first crossed in the wars between the **Kiev Rus** and the **Khazars**– but that isn't completely right, since only the upper class of the Khazars were of Hebraic descent, the tribe itself being a branch of the Turks that had accepted the Jewish faith.

If one follows the presentation of J. D. **Bruzkus**, respected Jewish author of the mid 20th century, a certain part of the Jews from Persia moved across the **Derbent** Pass to the lower Volga where **Atil** [west coast of Caspian on Volga delta], the capital city of the Khazarian **Khanate** rose up starting 724 AD. The tribal princes of the Turkish Khazars, at the time still idol-worshippers, did not want to accept either the Muslim faith – lest they should be subordinated to the caliph of Baghdad – nor to Christianity – lest they come under vassalage to the Byzantine emperor; and so the clan went over to the Jewish faith in 732. But there was also a Jewish colony in the **Bosporan Kingdom** [on the **Taman Peninsula** at east end of the Crimea, separating the Black Sea from the Sea of Azov] to which Hadrian had Jewish captives brought in 137, after the victory over Bar-Kokhba. Later a Jewish settlement sustained itself without break under the Goths and Huns in the Crimea; especially **Kaffa** (**Feodosia**) remained Jewish. In 933 Prince **Igor** [912-945, Grand Prince of Kiev, successor of **Oleg**, regent after death of **Riurik** founder of the Kiev Kingdom in 862] temporarily possessed **Kerch**, and his son **Sviatoslav** [Grand Prince 960-972] [G14] wrested the Don region from the Khazars. The Kiev Rus already ruled the entire Volga region including Atil in 909, and Russian ships appeared at **Samander** [south of Atil on the west coast of the Caspian]. Descendents of the Khazars were the **Kumyks** in the Caucasus. In the Crimea, on the other hand, they combined with the **Polovtsy** [nomadic Turkish branch from central Asia, in the northern Black Sea area and the Caucasus since the 10th century; called **Cuman** by western historians; see second map, below] to form the **Crimean Tatars**. (But the **Karaim** [a jewish sect that does not follow the Talmud] and Jewish residents of the Crimean did not go over to the Muslim Faith.) The

Khazars were finally conquered [much later] by **Tamerlane** [or Timur, the 14th century conqueror].

A few researchers however hypothesize (exact proof is absent) that the Hebrews had wandered to some extent through the south Russian region in west and northwest direction. Thus the Orientalist and Semitist Abraham **Harkavy** for example writes that the Jewish congregation in the future Russia "emerged from Jews that came from the Black Sea coast and from the Caucasus, where their ancestors had lived since the Assyrian and Babylonian captivity." J. D. Bruzkus also leans to this perspective. (Another opinion suggests it is the remnant of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel.) This migration presumably ended after the conquest of **Tmutarakans** [eastern shore of the Kerch straits, overlooking the eastern end of the Crimean Peninsula; the eastern flank of the old Bosporan Kingdom] (1097) by the Polovtsy. According to Harkavy's opinion the vernacular of these Jews at least since the ninth century was Slavic, and only in the 17th century, when the Ukrainian Jews fled from the pogroms of **Chmelnitzki** [Bogdan Chmelnitzki, Ukrainian Cossack, 1593-1657, led the successful Cossack rebellion against Poland with help from the Crimean Tatars], did Yiddish become the language of Jews in Poland.

[G15] In various manners the Jews also came to Kiev and settled there. Already under Igor, the lower part of the city was called "Kosary"; in 933 Igor brought Jews that had been taken captive in Kerch. Then in 965 Jews taken captive in the Crimea were brought there; in 969 *Kosaren* from Atil and Samander, in 989 from **Cherson** and in 1017 from Tmutarakan. In Kiev western Jews also emerged.: in connection with the caravan traffic from west to east, and starting at the end of the eleventh century, maybe on account of the persecution in Europe during the first Crusade.

Later researchers confirm likewise that in the 11th century, the "Jewish element" in Kiev is to be derived from the Khazars. Still earlier, at the turn of the 10th century the presence of a "khazar force and a khazar garrison," was chronicled in Kiev. And already "in the first half of the 11th century the jewish-khazar element in Kiev played "a significant roll." In the 9th and 10th century, Kiev was multinational and tolerant.

At the end of the 10th century, in the time when Prince Vladimir [**Vladimir I. Svyatoslavich** 980-1015, the Saint, Grand Prince of Kiev] was choosing a new faith for the Russians, there were not a few Jews in Kiev, and among them were found educated men that suggested taking on the Jewish faith. The choice fell out otherwise than it had 250 hears earlier in the Khazar Kingdom. **Karamsin** [1766-1826, Russian historian] relates it like this: "After he (Vladimir) had listened to the Jews, he asked where their homeland was. 'In Jerusalem,' answered the delegates, 'but God has chased us in his anger and sent us into a foreign land.' 'And you, whom God has punished, dare to teach others?' said Vladimir. 'We do not want to lose our fatherland like you have.'" After the Christianization of the Rus, according to Bruzkus, a portion of the Khazar Jews in Kiev also went over to Christianity and afterwards in Novgorod perhaps one of them – Luka Zhidyata – was even one of the first bishops and spiritual writers.

Christianity and Judaism being side-by-side in Kiev inevitably led to the learned zealously contrasting them. From that emerged the work significant to Russian literature, "Sermon on Law and Grace" ([by **Hilarion**, first Russian Metropolitan] middle 11th century), which

contributed to the settling of a Christian consciousness for the Russians that lasted for centuries. [G16] "The polemic here is as fresh and lively as in the letters of the apostles." In any case, it was the first century of Christianity in Russia. For the Russian neophytes of that time, the Jews were interesting, especially in connection to their religious presentation, and even in Kiev there were opportunities for contact with them. The interest was greater than later in the 18th century, when they again were physically close.

Then, for more than a century, the Jews took part in the expanded commerce of Kiev. "In the new city wall (completed in 1037) there was the Jews' Gate, which closed in the Jewish quarter." The Kiev Jews were not subjected to any limitations, and the princes did not handle themselves hostilely, but rather indeed vouchsafed to them protection, especially **Sviatopolk Iziaslavich** [Prince of Novgorod 1078-1087, Grand Prince of Kiev 1093-1113], since the trade and enterprising spirit of the Jews brought the princes financial advantage.

In 1113, **Vladimir** (later called "**Monomakh**"), out of qualms of conscience, even after the death of Sviatopolk, hesitated to ascend the Kiev Throne prior to one of the Svyatoslavich's, and "exploiting the anarchy, rioters plundered the house of the regimental commander Putiata and all Jews that had stood under the special protection of the greedy Sviatopolk in the capital city. … One reason for the Kiev revolt was apparently the usury of the Jews: probably, exploiting the shortage of money of the time, they enslaved the debtors with exorbitant interest." (For example there are indications in the "Statute" of Vladimir Monomakh that Kiev money-lenders received interest up to 50% per annum.) Karamsin therein appeals to the Chronicles and an extrapolation by Basil **Tatistcheff** [1686-1750; student of Peter the Great, first Russian historian]. In Tatistcheff we find moreover: "Afterwards they clubbed down many Jews and plundered their houses, because they had brought about many sicknesses to Christians and commerce with them had brought about great damage. Many of them, who had gathered in their synagogue seeking protection, defended themselves, as well as they could, and redeemed time until Vladimir would arrive." But when he had come, "the Kievites pleaded with him for retribution toward the [G17] Jews, because they had taken all the trades from Christians and under Sviatopolk had had much freedom and power…. They had also brought many over to their faith."

According to M. N. Pokrovski, the Kiev Pogrom of 1113 had social and not national character. (However the leaning of this "class-conscious" historian toward social interpretations is well-known.)

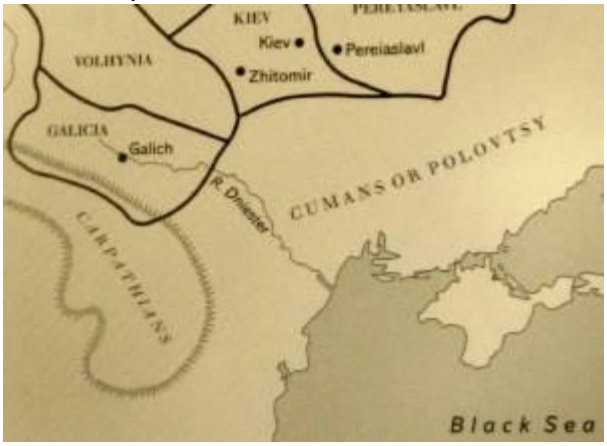
After he ascended to the Kiev throne, Vladimir answered the complainants, "Since many [Jews] everywhere have received access to the various princely courts and have migrated there, it is not appropriate for me, without the advice of the princes, and moreover contrary to right, to permit killing and plundering them. Hence I will without delay call the princes to assemble, to give counsel." In the Council a law limiting the interest was established, which Vladimir attached to Yaroslav's "Statute." Karamsin reports, appealing to Tatistcheff, that Vladimir "banned all Jews" upon the conclusion of the Council, "and from that time forth there were *none* left in our fatherland." But at the same time he qualifies: "in the Chronicles in contrast it says that in 1124 *the Jews in Kiev died* [in a great fire]; consequently, they had not been banned." (Bruzkus explains, that it "was a whole Quarter in the best part of the city… at the Jew's Gate next to the Golden Gate.")

At least one Jew enjoyed the trust of **Andrei Bogoliubskii** [or Andrey Bogolyubsky] in Vladimir. "Among the confidants of Andrei was a certain Ephraim Moisich, whose patronymic Moisich or Moisievich indicates his jewish derivation," and who according to the words of the Chronicle was among the instigators of the treason by which Andrei was murdered. However there is also a notation that says that under Andrei Bogoliubskii "many Bulgarians and Jews from the Volga territory came and had themselves baptized" and that after the murder of Andrei his son Georgi fled to a jewish Prince in Dagestan.

In any case the information on the Jews in the time of the Suzdal Rus is scanty, as their numbers were obviously small.

[G18] The "Jewish Encyclopedia" notes that in the Russian heroic songs (Bylinen) the "Jewish Czar" – e.g. the warrior Shidowin in the old **Bylina** about Ilya and Dobrin'a – is "a favorite general moniker for an enemy of the Christian faith." At the same time it could also be a trace of memories of the struggle against the Khazars. Here, the *religious* basis of this hostility and exclusion is made clear. On this basis, the Jews were not permitted to settle in the Muscovy Rus.

The invasion of the Tatars portended the end of the lively commerce of the Kiev Rus, and many Jews apparently went to Poland. (Also the jewish colonization into **Volhynia** and **Galicia** continued, where they had scarcely suffered from the Tatar invasion.) The Encyclopedia explains: "During the invasion of the Tatars (1239) which destroyed Kiev, the Jews also suffered, but in the second half of the 13th century they were invited by the Grand Princes to resettle in Kiev, which found itself under the domination of the Tatars. On account of the special rights, which were also granted the Jews in other possessions of the Tatars, envy was stirred up in the town residents against the Kiev Jews." Similar happened not only in Kiev, but also in the cities of North Russia, which "under the Tatar rule, were accessible for many [Moslem? see note 1] merchants from **Khoresm** or **Khiva**, who were long since experienced in trade and the tricks of profit-seeking. These people bought from the Tatars the principality's right to levy Tribute, they demanded excessive interest from poor people and, in case of their failure to pay, declared the debtors to be their slaves, and took away their freedom. The residents of Vladimir, Suzdal, and Rostov finally lost their patience and rose up together at the pealing of the Bells against these usurers; a few were killed and the rest chased off." A punitive expedition of the Khan against the mutineers was threatened, which however was hindered via the mediation of Alexander Nevsky. "In the documents of the 15th century, Kievite [G19] jewish tax-leasers are mentioned, who possessed a significant fortune."



Note 1. The word "Moslem" is in the German but not French translation. I am researching the Russian original.

The Judaizing Heresy

[G19] "A migration of Jews from Poland to the East, including White Russia [Belarus], should also be noted in the 15th century: there were lessers of tolls and other assessments in Minsk, Polotsk" and in Smolensk, although no settled congregations were formed there. After the short-lived banishment of jews from Lithuania (1496) the "eastward movement went forth with particular energy at the beginning of the 16th century."

The number of jews that migrated into the Muskovy Rus was insignificant although "influential Jews at that time had no difficulties going to Moscow." Toward the end of the 15th century in the very center of the spiritual and administrative power of the Rus, a change took place that, though barely noticed, could have drawn an ominous unrest in its wake, and had far-reaching consequences in the spiritual domain. It had to do with the "Judaizing Heresy." Saint **Joseph of Volokolamsk** [1439-1515] who resisted it, observed: "Since the time of Olga and Vladimir, the God-fearing Russian world has never experienced such a seduction."

According to Kramsin it began thus: the Jew **Zechariah**, who in 1470 had arrived in Novgorod from Kiev, "figured out how to lead astray two spirituals, **Dionis** and **Aleksei**; he assured them, that only the Law of Moses was divine; the history of the Redeemer was invented; the Messiah was not yet born; one should not pray to icons, etc. Thus began the Judaizing heresy." **Sergey Solovyov** [1820–79; great Russian historian] expands on this, that Zechariah accomplished it "with the aid of five accomplices, who also were Jewish," and that this heresy "obviously was a mixture of Judaism and Christian rationalism that denied the mystery of the holy Trinity and the divinity of Jesus Christ." "The Orthodox Priest Aleksei called himself Abraham, his wife he called Sarah and along with Dionis corrupted many spirituals and lay… But it is hard to understand how Zechariah was able so easily to increase the number of his Novgorod pupils, since his wisdom consisted entirely and only in the rejection of Christianity and the glorification of Judaism [G20]…Probably, Zechariah seduced the Russians with the jewish cabbala, a teaching that captured curious ignoramuses and in the 15th century was well-known, when many educated men "sought in it the solution to all important riddles of the human spirit. The cabbalists extolled themselves …, they were able… to discern all secrets of nature, explain dreams, prophecy the future, and conjure spirits."

J. Gessen, a jewish historian of the 20th century represents in contrast the opinion: "It is certain, that jews participated neither in the introduction of the heresy… nor its spread" (but with no indication of his sources). The encyclopedia of **Brockhaus and Efron** [1890-1906, Russian equivalent to the 1911 Britannica] explains: "Apparently the genuinely jewish element played no outstanding roll, limiting its contribution to a few rituals." The "Jewish Encyclopedia," which appeared about the same time, writes on the other hand: "today, since the publication of the 'Psalter of the Judaizers' and other memorials, the contested question of the jewish influence on the sects must… be seen as settled in a positive sense."

"The Novgorod heretics respected an orderly exterior, appeared to fast humbly and zealously fulfilled all the duties of Piety," they "made themselves noticed by the people and contributed to the rapid spreading of the heresy." When after the fall of Novgorod **Ivan Vassilyevich III** [1440-1505, English name would be "John son of Basil," Grand Prince of Moscoy, united the greater Russian territory under Moscow's rule] visited the city, he was

impressed by their Piety and took both of the first heretics, Aleksei and Dionis, to Moscow in 1480 and promoted them as high priests of the Assumption of Mary and the Archangel cathedrals of the Kremlin. "With them also the schism was brought over, the roots of which remained in Novgorod. Aleksei found special favor with the ruler and had free access to him, and with his Secret Teaching" enticed not only several high spirituals and officials, but moved the Grand Prince to appoint the archimandrite [=head abbot in Eastern Orthodoxy] **Zossima** as Metropolitan, that is, the head of the entire Russian church – a man from the very circle of the those he had enticed with the heresy. In addition, he enticed **Helena** to the heresy — daughter-in-law of the Grand Prince, widow of **Ivan the** [G21] **Younger** and mother of the heir to the throne, the "blessed nephew **Dimitri**."

The rapid success of this movement and the ease with which it spread is astonishing. This is obviously to be explained through mutual interests. "When the '**Psalter of the Judaizing**' and other works — which could mislead the inexperienced Russian reader and were sometimes unambiguously antichristian – were translated from Hebrew into Russian, one could have assumed that only Jews and Judaism would have been interested in them." But also "the Russian reader was… interested in the translations of jewish religious texts" – and this explains the "success, which the propaganda of the 'Judaizing' had in various classes of society." The sharpness and liveliness of this contact reminds of that which had emerged in Kiev in the 11th century.

The Novgorod Archbishop **Gennadi** uncovered the heresy in 1487, sent irrefutable proofs of it to Moscow, hunted the heresy out and unmasked it, until in 1490 a church Council assembled to discuss the matter, under leadership of the just-promoted Metropolitan Sossima. "With horror they heard the complaint of Gennadi, … that these apostates insult Christ and the mother of God, spit on the cross, call the icons idolatrous images, bite on them with their teeth and throw them into impure places, believe in neither the kingdom of Heaven nor the resurrection of the dead, and entice the weak, while remaining quiet in the presence of zealous Christians." "From the Judgment [of the Council] it is apparent, that the Judaizers did not recognize Jesus Christ as the Son of God, that they taught, the Messiah is not yet appeared, that they observe the Old Testament Sabbath day rather then the Christian Sunday." It was suggested to the Council to execute the heretics but, in accordance with the will of Ivan III, they were sentenced instead to imprisonment and the heresy was anathematized. "In view of the coarseness of the century and the seriousness of the moral corruption, such a punishment was [G22] extraordinarily mild." The historians unanimously explain this hesitation of Ivan in that the heresy had already spread widely under his own roof and was practiced by well-known, influential people," among whom was **Feodor Kuritsyn,** Ivan's plenipotentiary Secretary (so to speak the "Foreign Minister"), "famous on account of his education and his capabilities." "The noteworthy liberalism of Moscow flowed from the temporary 'Dictator of the heart' F. Kuritsyn. The magic of his secret salon was enjoyed even by the Grand Prince and his daughter-in-law… The heresy was by no means in abatement, but rather… prospered magnificently and spread itself out. At the Moscow court… astrology and magic along with the attractions of a pseudo-scientific revision of the entire medieval worldview" were solidly propagated, which was "free-thinking, the appeal of enlightenment, and the power of fashion."

The *Jewish Encyclopedia* sets forth moreover that Ivan III "out of political motivations did not stand against the heresy. With Zechariah's help, he hoped to strengthen his influence in Lithuania," and besides that he wanted to secure the favor of influential jews from the Crimea: "of the princes and rulers of Taman Peninsula, **Zacharias de Ghisolfi**," and of the jew **Chozi Kokos**, a confidant of the **Khan Mengli Giray** [or **Girai**].

After the Council of 1490 Sossima continued to sponsor a secret society for several years, but then was himself discovered, and in 1494 the Grand Prince commanded him to depose himself without process and to withdraw into a cloister, without throwing up dust and to all appearances willingly. "The heresy however did not abate. For a time (1498) its votaries in Moscow seized almost all the power, and their charge Dmitrii, the Son of the Princess Helena, was coronated as Czar." Soon Ivan III reconciled himself with his wife **Sophia Palaiologos**, and in 1502 his son **Vassili** inherited the throne. (Kurizyn by this time was dead.) Of the heretics, after the Council of 1504, one part was burned, a second part thrown in prison, and a third fled to Lithuania, "where they formally adopted the Mosaic faith."

It must be added that the overcoming of the Judaizing Heresy gave the spiritual life of the Muscovy Rus at turn of the 16th century a new impetus, and contributed to recognizing the need for spiritual education, for schools for the Spiritual; and the name of Archbishop Gennadi is associated with the collecting and [G23] publication of the first church-slavic Bible, of which there had not to that point been a consolidated text corpus in the Christian East. The printing press was invented, and "after 80 years this Gennadi Bible… was printed in **Ostrog** (1580/82) as the first church-slavic Bible; with its appearance, it took over the entire orthodox East." Even academy member **S. F. Platonov** gives a generalizing judgment about the phenomenon: "The movement of *judaizing* no doubt contained elements of the West European rationalism… The heresy was condemned; its advocates had to suffer, but the attitude of critique and skepticism produced by them over against dogma and church order remained."

Today's *Jewish Encyclopedia* remembers "the thesis that an extremely negative posture toward Judaism and the Jews was unknown in the Muskovy Rus up to the beginning of the 16th century," and derives it from this struggle against the Judaizers. Judging by the spiritual and civil measures of the circumstances, that is thoroughly probable. J. Gessen however contends: "it is significant, that such a specific coloring of the heresy as *Judaizing* did not lessen the success of the sects and in no way led to the development of a hostile stance toward the Jews."

You're in; no, you're out. Okay, you're in

[G23] Judging by its stable manner of life, it was in neighboring Poland that the biggest jewish community emerged, expanded and became strong from the 13th to the 18th century. It formed the basis of the future Russian jewry, which became the most important part of World jewry until the 20th century. Starting in the 16th century "a significant number of Polish and Czech Jews emigrated" into the Ukraine, White Russia and Lithuania. In the 15th century jewish merchants traveled still unhindered from the Polish-Lithuanian Kingdom to Moscow. But that changed under **Ivan [IV] the Terrible**: jewish merchants were forbidden

entry. When in 1550 the Polish King **Sigismund August** desired to permit them free entry into Russia, this was denied by Ivan with these words: "We absolutely do not permit the entry of the Jew into my lands, because we do not wish to see evil in our lands, but rather may God grant that the people in my land may have rest from that irritation. And you, our brother, should not write us on account of the jews again," for they had "alienated the Russians from [G24] Christianity, brought poisonous plants into our lands and done much evil to our lands."

According to a legend, Ivan IV [the Terrible], upon the annexation of **Polotsk** in 1563, ordered all jews to be baptized in response to complaints of Russian residents "against evil things and bullying" by jews, leasers and others empowered by Polish magnates. Those that refused, apparently about 300 persons, are supposed to have been drowned in his presence in the Dvina. But careful historians, as e.g. J. I. Gessen, do not confirm this version even in moderated form and do not mention it once.

Instead of that, Gessen writes that under the **False Dimitry I** (1605/06) both jews and other foreigners "in relatively large number" were baptized in Moscow. The story goes according to "In the Time of Troubles" [by Sergey Ivanov, regarding the 15-year period 1598-1613 of confusion following the failed Rurik Dynasty] that the **False Dimitry II** (the "Thief of Tushino") was "born a Jew." (The sources give contradictory information regarding the ancestry of "the Thief of Tushino.")

[Sozhenitsyn relates that after the "**Time of Troubles,**" jews, like Polish-Lithuanian folk in general had restricted rights in Russia. [G25] There was prohibition of peddling in Moscow, or to travel beyond Moscow at all. But ordinances were contradictory.

[**Mikhail Feodorovich** (Michael son of Theodore; 1613 became first Romanov chosen as czar) did not pursue a principial policy against Jews.

[**Alexis Michaelovitch** (Alex son of Michael; czar 1645). No sign of discrimination against jews in the law book; free access granted to all cities including Moscow. During the seizure of Lithuania, as well as later wars, treatment of Jews in captivity was not worse than other foreigners.

[After the **Treaty of Andrusovo** (1667) (in which Smolensk, Kiev and the whole eastern bank of the Dnieper River remained Russian) jews were invited to stay, and many did. Some converted to Christianity and some of these became heads of noble families. A small number of baptized migrated to a Cossack village on the Don and a dozen Cossack families descended from them. Samuel Collins, an Englishman residing in Moscow at the time, related that "in a short time, the Jews have in a remarkable way spread through the city and court, helped by the mediation of a Jewish surgeon."

[**Feodor III, son of Alexis** (Theodore, 1676 czar]. Jews not to be assessed toll on entry to Moscow, because they are not allowed in, whether with or without wares. But the practice did not correspond to the theory.

[In the first year of **Peter the Great,** doors were opened to talented foreigners, but not jews on account of their being "rogues and deceivers." Yet there is no evidence of limitations imposed on them, nor special laws. Indeed, jews were found close to the Emperor:

- Vice-chancellor Baron **Peter Shafirov**
- close confidant **Abram Veselovsky**, later accused of thieving
- his brother, Isaac **Veselovsky**
- **Anton de Vieira**, general police master of Petersburg
- Vivière, head of secret police

and others. To A. Veselovsky, Peter wrote that what matters is competence and decency, not baptism or circumcision.

[Jewish houses in Germany inquired whether Russia would guarantee their commerce with Persia, but never received it.

[At start of 18th century there was increased jewish trade activity in **Little Russia** (=Ukraine), [G27] a year before Russian merchants got the right. Hetman (Ukrainian chief) **Skoropadski** gave order several times for their expulsion but this was not obeyed and jewish presence actually increased.

[**Catherine I** (1724 Czarina) decreed removal of jews from Ukraine and Russian cities; but only lasted one year.

[**Peter II** (Czar 1727) permitted jews into Little Russia, first as "temporary visits" on the ground of their usefulness for trade, then, more and more reasons found to make it permanent. Under **Anna** (1730 Czarina), this right was extended to Smolensk and Slobodsky. In 1734 permission was given to distil brandy, and in 1736 it was permitted to import vodka from Poland into Russia.

[Baltic financier **Levy Lipman** probably bailed out the future czarina Anna financially while she was living in **Courland**. [G28] Later, he achieved a high rank in her court in financial administration, and received various monopoly rights.]

Elisabeth [1741 czarina] however issued a **Ukase** [imperial Russian decree] one year after taking the throne (Dec 1742): "Jews are forbidden to live anywhere in our realm; now it has been made known to us, that these jews still find themselves in our realm and, under various pretexts, especially in Little Russia, they prolong their stay, which is in no way beneficial; but as we must expect only great injuries to our loyal subjects from such haters of the name of our Savior Jesus Christ, [G29] we order: all jews, male and female, along with their entire possession, to be sent without delay from our realm, over the border, and in the future not allowed back in, unless it should be that one of them should confess our Greek-Christian religion."

This was the same religious intolerance that shook Europe for centuries. The way of thinking of that time was not unique in any special Russian way, nor was it an exclusively jew-hostile attitude. Among Christians the religious intolerance was not practiced with any less cruelty. Thus, the **Old Believers**, i.e. men of the same orthodox faith, were persecuted with fire and sword.

This Ukase of Elisabeth "was made known throughout the realm. But immediately attempts were made to move the Ruler to relent." The military chancellor reported to the Senate from the Ukraine that already 140 people were evicted, but that "the prohibition for jews to bring goods in would lead to a reduction in state income." The Senate reported to the Czarina that "trade had suffered great damage in Little Russia as well as the Baltic provinces by the Ukase of the previous year to not allow jews into the realm, and also the state burse would suffer by the reduction of income from tolls." The czarina answered with the resolution: "I desire no profit from the enemies of Christ."

[Sozhenitsyn discusses contradictory sources as to the number of jews that were actually evicted, ranging from almost none, to 35,000, the latter figure having questionable origins; [G30] strong resistance to the edict by jews, land proprietors and the state apparatuses meant it was enforced almost as little as previous attempts had been.

[(G31) Catherine II, Czarin 1762 in consequence of a coup, and also being a neophyte to Orthodoxy herself, was unwilling to start her reign opening things up for jews, though the Senate advised for it. Jews pressed for it and had spokesmen in Petersburg, Riga, and Ukraine. [G32] She found a way around her own law in permitting their entry for colonization into "**New Russia**" [area between Crimea and Moldavia], which was still a wasteland. Was organized secretly from Riga, and the nationality of the jews was kept more or less secret. Jews went there from Poland and Lithuania.

[In the first Partition of Poland, 1772, Russia reacquired White Russia (Belarus) along with her 100,000 jews.]

After the 11th century more and more jews came into Poland because princes and later, kings encouraged "all active, industrious people" from western Europe to settle there. Jews actually received special rights, e.g. in 13th c., from Boleslav the Pious; in 14th c., from Kasimir the Great; in 16th c., from Sigismund I and Stephan Bathony; though this sometimes alternated with repression, e.g. in 15th c., by Vladislav Yagiello and Alexander, son of Kasimir: there were two pogroms in Krakow. In 16th c several ghettos were constructed partly to protect them. The Roman Catholic spirituals were the most continuous source of a hostile stance. Nevertheless on balance it must have been a favorable environment, since in first half of 16th c. [G33] the jewish population increased substantially. There was a big role for jews in the business activity of landlords in that they became leasers of the brandy distilling operations.

After the Tater devastation, Kiev in the 14th c. came under Lithuania and/or Poland, and in this arrangement "more and more jews wandered from Podolia and Volhynia into the Ukraine," in the regions of Kiev, Poltava, and Chernigov. This process accelerated when a large part of Ukraine came directly under Poland in the **Union of Lublin**, 1569. The main population consisted of orthodox peasants, who for a long time had had special rights and were free of tolls. Now began an intensive colonization of the Ukraine by the polish **Szlachta** (Polish nobility) with conjoint action by the jews. "The Cossacks were forced into immobility, and obligated to perform drudgery and pay taxes… The Catholic lords burdened the orthodox peasants with various taxes and service duties, and in this exploitation the jews also partly played a sad role." They leased from the lords the "propination," i.e. the right to distil vodka and sell it, as well as other trades. "The jewish leasers, who represented the Polish lord, received – of course only to a certain degree – the power that the landholder had over the peasants; and since the jewish leasers… strove to wring from the peasants a maximum profit, the rage of the peasants rose not only against the Catholic landlords but also against the jewish leasers. When from this situation a bloody uprising of the Cossacks

arose in 1648 under leadership of Chmelnitsky, Jews as well as Poles were the victims" – 10,000 jews died.

The jews were lured in by the natural riches of the Ukraine and by polish magnates that were colonizing the land, and thus assumed an important economic role. Since they served the interests of the landlords and the regime… the jews brought on themselves the hatred of the residents." N. I. Kostomarov adds that the jews leased not only various branches of the privileged industries but even the orthodox churches, gaining the right to levy a fee for baptisms.

After the uprising, the "jews, on the basis of the **Treaty of Belaia Tserkov** (1651) were again given the right to resettle in the Ukraine… The Jews were like before resident and leaser of the royal industries and the industries of the Szlachta, and so it was to remain."

"Going into the 18th c. brandy distilling was practically the main profession of jews." "This trade often led to conflicts with the peasants, who sometimes were drawn into the taverns not so much because well-to-do, but on account of their poverty and misery."

Included among the restrictions placed on the Polish jews in response to demands of the Catholic church was the prohibition against jews having Christian house-servants.

[G34] Because of the recruitment coupled with the state tax increases in neighboring Russia, not a few refugees came to Poland, where they had no rights. In the debates of Catherine's commission for reworking a new Law code (1767/68), one could hear that in Poland "already a number of Russian refugees are servants to jews."

The Kahal and Civil Rights

[G34] The jews of Poland maintained a vigorous economic relation to the surrounding population, yet in the five centuries that they lived there, did not permit any influence from outside themselves. One century after another rolled by in post-medieval European development, while the Polish jews remained confined to themselves, and were always an anachronistic appearance. They had a fixed order within themselves. (Here it is granted, that these conditions, which later remained intact also in Russia until the middle of the 19th century, were favorable for the religious and national preservation of the jews from the very beginning of their Diaspora.) The whole jewish life was guided by the **Kahal**, which had developed from the communal life of the jews, and the Rabbis. [The Kahal, pl. Kehilot was the autonomous organization of the leadership of the jewish congregations in Poland.]

[Solzhenitsyn relates that the Kahal was a buffer between polish authorities and jewish people; collected the taxes for example. Took care of the needy and also regulated jewish commerce, approved resales, purchases, and leases. Adjudicated disputes between jews, which could not be appealed to the secular legal system without incurring the ban (herem).

What may have started as a democratic institution took on the qualities of an oligarchy bent on maintaining its own power. In turn, the rabbis and Kahal had a mutually exploitative relation, in that the rabbis were the executive enforcement arm of the Kahal, and the rabbis owed their position to appointment by the Kahal. Likewise, the Kahal owed the maintenance of its power more to the secular regime than to its own people.

[Toward end of 17th century and through 18th century, the country was torn by strife; the magnates' arbitrariness increased further. Jews became poor and demoralized, and hardened in early Middle-age forms of life. [G35] "They became child-like or better: childish oldsters."

[16th century jewish spiritual rulers were concentrated in German and Polish jewry. They put barriers up against contact with outsiders. The rabbinate held the jews in firm bondage to the past.]

The fact that the jewish people have held themselves together in their diaspora for 2,000 years inspires wonder and admiration. But when one examines certain periods more closely, as e.g. the Polish/Russian one in the 16th and into the middle of the 17th century, and how this unity was only won by means of methods of suppression exercised by the Kehilot, then one no longer knows if it can be evaluated merely as an aspect of religious tradition. If the slightest trace of such isolationism were detected amongst us Russians, we would be severely faulted.

When jewry came under the rule of the Russian state, this indigenous system remained, in which the hierarchy of the Kahal had a self-interest. According to J. I. Gessen, all the anger that enlightened jews felt against the ossifying Talmudic tradition became stronger in the middle of the 19th century: "The representatives of the ruling class of jewry staked everything on persuading the [Russian] administration of the necessity to maintain this centuries-old institution, which reflected the interests both of the Russian power and of the ruling jewish class"; "the Kahal in connection with the Rabbis held all the power and not seldom, abused it: it misappropriated public funds, trampled the rights of the poor, arbitrarily increased taxes and wreaked vengeance on personal enemies." At the end of the 18th century the Governor of one the administrative regions attached to Russia wrote in his report: "The rabbis, [G36] the spiritual Council and the Kahal, 'which are knitted closely together, hold all things in their hand and lord it over the conscience of the jews, and in complete isolation rule over them, without any relation to the civil order.'"

In 18th century Eastern European jewry two movements developed: the religious one of the **Hassidim** [or Hasidim, or Chasidim] and the enlightening one favoring secular culture, spearheaded by Moses Mendelsohn; but the Kehiloth suppressed both with all its might. In 1781 the Rabbinate of [Lithuanian] **Vilna** placed the ban over the Hassidim and in 1784 the Assembly of Rabbis in [White Russian] **Mogilev** declared them as "*outlaws* and their

property as *without owner*. Thereafter mobs laid waste to the houses of Hassidim in several cities," i.e. it was an intra-jewish pogrom. The Hassidim were persecuted in the most cruel and unfair manner; their rivals did not even feel embarrassed to denounce them before the Russian authorities with false political charges. In turn, the officials in 1799, based on the complaint of Hassidics, arrested members of the Kehilot of Vilna for embezzlement of tax money. The Hassidim movement expanded, being especially successful in certain provinces. The rabbis had hassidic books publicly burned and the Hassidim emerged as defenders of the people against abuses of the Kehilot. "It is apparent that in those times the religious war overshadowed other questions of religious life."

The part of White Russia that fell to Russia in 1772 consisted of the Provinces of Polotsk (later Vitebsk) and Mogilev. In a communiqué to those governments in the name of Catherine it was explained that their residents "of whichever sex and standing they might be" would from now on have the right to public exercise of faith and to own property in addition to "all rights, freedoms and privileges which their subjects previously enjoyed." The jews were thus legally set as equals to Christians, which had not been the case in Poland. As to the jews, it was added that their businesses "stay and remain intact with all those rights that they today…enjoy" – i.e. nothing would be taken away from Polish rights either. Through this, the previous power of the Kehilot survived: the jews with their Kahal system remained isolated from the rest of the population and were not immediately taken into the class of traders and [G37] businessmen that corresponded to their predominant occupations.

In the beginning, Catherine was on her guard not only against any hostile reaction of the Polish nobility, from whom power threatened to slip away, but also against giving an unfavorable impression to her Orthodox subjects. But she did extend wider rights to the jews, whom she wished well and promised herself of their economic utility to the nation. Already in 1778 the most recent general Russian regulation was extended to White Russia: those holding up to 500 Rubles belonged to the class of trade-plying **townsmen**; those with more capital, to the class of **merchant**, endowed into one of three **guilds** according to possession: both classes were free of the poll tax and paid 1% of their capital which was "declared according to conscience."

This regulation was of particularly great significance: it set aside the national isolation of jews up to that time – Catherine wanted to end that. Further, she subverted the traditional

Polish perspective on jews as an element standing outside the state. Moreover, she weakened the Kahal system, the capability of the Kahal to compel. "The process began of pressing jews into the civil organism… The jews availed themselves to a great extent of the right to be registered as merchants" – so that e.g. 10% of the jewish population in the Mogilev Province declared themselves as merchants (but only 5.5% of the Christians). The jewish merchants were now freed from the tax obligation to the Kahal and did not have to apply to the Kahal any more for permission to be temporarily absent – they had only to deal with the cognizant magistrate. (In 1780 the jews in Mogilev and Shklov greeted Catherine upon her arrival with odes.)

With this advance of jewish merchants the civil category "jew" ceased to exist. All other jews had now likewise to be assigned to a status, and obviously the only one left for them was "townsmen." But at first, few wanted to be reclassified as such, since the annual poll tax for townsmen at that time was 60 kopecks but only 50 kopecks for "jews." However, there was no other option. From 1783, neither the jewish townsmen [G38] nor merchants needed to pay their taxes to the Kahal, but instead, to the magistrate, each according to his class, and from him they also received their travel passes.

The new order had consequences for the cities, which only took status into consideration, not nationality. According to this arrangement, all townsmen (thus: also all jews) had the right to participate in the local class governance and occupy official posts. "Corresponding to the conditions of that time this meant that the jews became citizens with equal rights… The entry of jews as citizens with equal right into the merchant guilds and townsmen class was an event of great social significance," it was supposed to "transform the jews into an economic power that would have to be reckoned with, and raise their morale." It also made the practical protection of their life-interests easier." At that time the classes of traders and tradesmen just like the municipal commonwealth had a broad self-determination…Thus, a certain administrative and judicial power was placed into the hands of jews just like Christians, through which the jewish population held a commercial and civil influence and significance." Jews could now not only become mayors but also advisory delegates and judges. At first limitations were enacted in the larger cities to ensure that no more jews occupied electable positions than Christians. In 1786 however "Catherine sent… to the Governor General of White Russia a command written by her own hand: to actualize the equality of jews 'in the municipal-class self-governance … unconditionally and without any hesitation' and 'to impose an appropriate penalty upon anyone that should hinder this equality.'"

It should be pointed out that the jews thus were given equal rights not only in contrast to Poland, but also earlier than in France or the German states. (Under Frederick the Great the jews suffered great limitations.) Indeed: the jews in Russia had from the beginning the

personal freedom that the Russian peasants were only granted 80 years later. Paradoxically, the jews gained greater freedom than even the Russian merchants and tradesmen. The latter had to live exclusively in the cities, while in contrast the jewish population could "live in colonizations in the country and distill liquor." "Although the jews dwelled in clusters [G39] not only in the city but also in the villages, they were accounted as part of the city contingent… inclusive of merchant and townsmen classes." "According to the manner of their activity and surrounded by unfree peasantry they played an important economic roll. Rural trade was concentrated in their hands, and they leased various posts belonging to the landowners' privilege – specifically, the sale of vodka in taverns – and therewith fostered "the expansion of drunkenness." The White-Russian powers reported: "The presence of jews in the villages acts with harm upon the economic and moral condition of the rural population, because the jews… encourage drunkenness among the local population." "In the stance taken by the powers-that-be, it was indicated among other things that the jews led the peasants astray with drunkenness, idleness and poverty, that they had given them vodka on credit etc. [reception of pledges for vodka]." But "the brandy operations were an attractive source of income" for both the Polish landowners and the jewish commissioners.

Granted, the gift of citizenship that the Jews received brought a danger with it: obviously the jews were also supposed to acquiesce to the general rule to cease the brandy business in the villages and move out. In 1783 the following was published: "The general rule requires every citizen to apply himself in a respectable trade and business, but not the distilling of schnapps as that is not a fitting business,' and whenever the proprietor 'permits the merchant, townsman or jew' to distill vodka, he will be held as a law-breaker." And thus it happened: "they began to transfer the jews from the villages to the cities to deflect them from their centuries-old occupation … the leasing of distilleries and taverns."

Naturally, to the jews the threat of a complete removal from the villages naturally appeared not as a uniform civil measure, but rather as one that was set up specially to oppose their national religion. The jewish townsmen that were supposed to be resettled into the city and unambiguously were to be robbed of a very lucrative business in the country, fell into an inner-city and inner-jewish competition. Indignation grew among the jews, and in 1784 a commission of the Kehilot traveled to St Petersburg to seek [G40] the cancellation of these measures. (At the same time the Kehilot reasoned that they should, with the help of the

administration, regain their lost power in its full extent over the jewish population.) But the answer of the czarina read: "As soon as the people yoked to the jewish law have … arrived at the condition of equality, the Order must be upheld in every case, so that each according to his rank and status enjoys the benefits and rights, without distinction of belief or national origin.

But the clenched power of the Polish proprietors also had to be reckoned with. Although the administration of White Russia forbad them in 1783 to lease the schnapps distilling "to unauthorized person, 'especially jews'… the landlords continued to lease this industry to jews. That was their right," an inheritance of centuries-old Polish custom.

The Senate did not venture to apply force against the landholders and in 1786 removed their jurisdiction to relocate jews into cities. For this a compromise was found: The jews would be regarded as people that had relocated to the cities, but would retain the right to *temporary* visits to the villages. That meant that those that were living in the villages continued to live there. The Senate permission of 1786 permitted the jews to live in villages and "jews were allowed to lease from the landholders the right to produce and sell alcoholic beverages, while Christian merchants and townsmen did not obtain these rights."

Even the efforts of the delegation of Kehilot in St Petersburg was not wholly without success. They did not get what they came for – the establishment of a separate jewish court for all contentions between jews – but in 1786 a significant part of their supervisory right was given back: the supervision of jewish townsmen i.e. the majority of the jewish population. This included not only the division of public benefits but also the levying of poll tax and adjudicating the right to separate from the congregation. Thus, the administration recognized its interest in not weakening the power of the Kahal.

In all Russia, the status of traders and businessmen (merchants and townsmen) did not have the right to choose [G41] their residences. Their members were bound to that locality in which they were registered, in order that the financial position of their localities would not be weakened. However, the Senate made an exception in 1782 for White Russia: The merchants could move "as the case might be, as it was propitious for commerce" from one city to another. The ruling favored especially the jewish merchants.

However, they began to exploit this right in a greater extent than had been foreseen: "Jewish merchants began to be registered in Moscow and Smolensk." "Jews began soon after the annexation of White Russia in 1882 to settle in Moscow…. By the end of the 18th century the number of jews in Moscow was considerable…. Some jews that had entered the ranks of the Moscow merchant class began to practice wholesaling… other jews in contrast sold foreign goods from their apartments or in the courts, or began peddling, though this was at the time forbidden."

In 1790 the Moscow merchants submitted a complaint: "In Moscow has emerged 'a not insignificant number of jews' from foreign countries and from White Russian who as opportunity afforded joined the Moscow merchant guilds and then utilized forbidden methods of business, which brought about 'very hurtful damage,' and the cheapness of their goods indicated that it involved smuggling, but moreover as is well-known they cut coins: it is possible, that they will also do this in Moscow." As amends to "their thoroughly cagey findings," the Moscow merchants demanded their removal from Moscow. The jewish merchants appealed with "a counter-complaint… that they were not accepted into the Smolensk and Moscow merchant guilds."

The "Council of her Majesty" heard the complaints. In accordance with the Unified Russian Order, she firmly established that the jews did not have the right "to be registered in the Russian trading towns and harbors," but only in White Russia. "By no means is usefulness to be expected" from the migration of jews into Moscow . In December 1791 she promulgated a highest-order Ukase, which prohibited jews "to join the merchant guilds of the inner Provinces," but permitted them "for a limited time for trade reasons to enter Moscow." [G42] Jews were allowed to utilize the rights of the merchant guild and townsman class only in White Russia. The right to permanent residency and membership in the townsman class, Catherine continued, was granted in New Russia, now accessible in the viceregencies of Yekaterinoslav ["Glory of Catherine the Great"; much later, name changed to Dnepropetrovsk] and Taurida (shortly thereafter these became the Provinces of Yekaterinoslav, Taurida, and Cherson); that is, Catherine allowed jews to migrate into the new, expansive territories, into which Christian merchants and townsmen from the provinces of interior Russia generally were not permitted to emigrate. When in 1796 "it was made known that groups of jews [already] …. had immigrated into the Kiev, Chernigov and Novgorod-Syeversk Provinces," it was likewise granted there "to utilize the right of the merchant guild and the townsman class."

The pre-Revolution Jewish Encyclopedia writes: The Ukase of 1791 "laid the groundwork for setting up the pale of settlement, even if it wasn't so intended. Under the conditions of the then-obtaining social and civic order in general, and of jewish life in particular, the administration could not consider bringing about a particularly onerous situation and conclude for them exceptional laws, which among other things would restrict the right of residency. In the context of its time, this Ukase did not contain that which in this respect would have brought the jews into a less favorable condition than the Christians… The Ukase of 1791 in no way limited the rights of jews in the choice of residency, created no special 'borders,' and 'for jews the way was opened into new regions, into which in general people could not emigrate.' The main point of the decree was not concerned with their jewishness, but that they were traders; the question was not considered from the national or religious point of view, but only from the viewpoint of usefulness."

This Ukase of 1791, which actually privileged jewish merchants in comparison to Christian ones, was in the course of time the basis for the future "Pale of Settlement.," which almost until the Revolution cast as it were a dark shadow over Russia.

By itself however the Ukase of 1791 was not so oppressive in its outworking as to prevent "a small [jewish] colony from emerging in St Petersburg by the end of the reign of Catherine II." [G43] Here lived "the famous tax-leaser Abram Peretz" and some of the merchants close to him, and also, "while the religious struggle was in full swing, the rabbi **Avigdor Chaimovitch** and his opponent, the famous hassidic Tzadik **Zalman Boruchovitch**."

Rabbi Schneur Zalman
BORUCHOVITCH

In 1793 and 1795 the second and third Partition of Poland took place, and the jewish population from Lithuania, Poldolia, and Volhynia, numbering almost a million, came under Russia's jurisdiction. This increase in population was a very significant event, though for a long time not recognized as such. It later influenced the fate of both Russia and the jewry of East Europe.

"After centuries-long wandering [jewry] came under one roof, in a single great congregation."

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In the now vastly-expanded region of jewish settlement, the same questions came up as before. The jews obtained rights of Merchant guilds and townsmen, which they had not possessed in Poland, and they got the right to equal participation in the class-municipal self-government… then had to accept the restrictions of this status: they could not migrate into the cities of the inner-Russian provinces, and were liable to be moved out of the villages.

With the now huge extent of the jewish population, the Russian regime no longer had a way to veil the fact that the jews continued to live in the villages simply by modeling it as a "temporary visit." "A burning question …. was whether the economic condition could tolerate so many tradesmen and traders living amongst the peasants."

In order to defuse the problem, many Shtetl were made equal to cities. Thus, the legal possibility came about for jews to continue living there. But with the large number of jews in the country and the high population density in the cities, that was no solution.

[G43] Now it seemed to be a natural way out, that the jews would take advantage of the possibility offered by Catherine to settle in the huge, scarcely-occupied New Russia. The new settlers were offered inducements, but this "did not succeed in setting a colonization movement into motion. Even the freedom of the new settlers from taxes appeared not to be attractive enough" to induce such a migration.

Thus Catherine decided in 1794 to induce the jews to emigrate with contrary measures: the jews were relocated out of the villages. At the same time, she decided to assess the entire jewish population with a tax that was double that paid by the Christians. (Such a tax had already been paid for a long time by the Old Believers, but applied to the jews, this law proved to be neither effective nor of long duration.)

Those were the last regulations of Catherine. From the end of 1796 Paul I reigned. The Jewish Encyclopedia evaluates him in this way: "The time of the angry rule of Paul I passed well for the jews… All edicts of Paul I concerning the jews indicate that the monarch was tolerant and benevolent toward the jewish population." "When the interest of jews conflicted with Christians, Paul I by no means automatically sided with the Christian." Even when in 1797 he ordered "measures to reduce the power of the jews and the spirituals over the peasants," that was "actually not set up against the jews: the point was the protection of the peasants." Paul recognized also "the right of the Hassidim not to have to live in secrecy." He extended the right of jews to belong to the merchant- and townsmen-class even to the Courland Province (which was no Polish inheritance, and later, it also did not belong to the "pale of settlement"). Consistent with that policy, he denied the respective petitions of the parishes of Kovno, Kamenez-Podolsk, Kiev and Vilna, to be permitted to move the jews out of their cities.

Paul had inherited the stubborn resistance of the Polish landholders against any changing of their rights; among these was the right over the jews and the right to hold court over them. They misused these rights often. Thus the Complaint of the jews of **Berdychiv** [Ukraine] against the princes of Radziwill stated: "in order to hold our [G45] religious services, we must first pay gold to those to whom the prince has leased our faith," and against Catherine's former favorite [Simon] **Zorich**: "one ought not to have to pay him for the air one breathes." In Poland many Shtetl and cities were the possession of nobles, and the landowners assessed arbitrary and opportunistic levies that the residents had to pay.

Derzhavin and the Belarus famine

[G45] Since the start of the reign of Paul I there was a great famine in White Russia, especially in the province of Minsk. The poet **Gavrila Romanovich Derzhavin,** then serving as Senator, was commissioned to go there and determine its cause and seek a solution — for which task he received no money to buy grain, but instead had the right to confiscate possessions of negligent landowners, sell their stockpile and distribute them.

Derzhavin was not just a great poet, but also an outstanding statesman who left behind unique proofs of his effectiveness which we want to delve into in the following.

G. R. Derzhavin

The famine, as Derzhavin confirmed, was unimaginable. He writes "when I arrived in White Russia, I personally convinced myself of the great scarcity of grain among the villagers. Due to the very serious hunger — virtually all nourished themselves from fermented grass, mixed with a tiny portion of meal or pearl barley –, "the peasants were malnourished and sallow like dead people. "In order to remedy this, I found out which of the rich landowners had grain in their storehouses," took it to the town center and distributed it to the poor; and I commanded the goods of a Polish Count "in view of such pitiless greed" to be yielded to a trustee. "After the nobleman was made aware of the dire situation he awoke from his slumber or better, from his shocking indifference toward humanity: he used every means to feed the peasants by acquiring grain from neighboring provinces and when after two months the harvest time arrived… the famine ended." When Derzhavin visited the provincial government, he so pursued the noble rulers and [G46] district police captains that the nobility "banded together together and sent the Czar a scurrilous complain against Derzhavin."

Derzhavin discovered that the jewish schnapps distillers exploited the alcoholism of the peasants: "After I had discovered that the jews from profit-seeking use the lure of drink to beguile grain from the peasants, convert it into brandy and therewith cause a famine. I commanded that they should close their distilleries in the village Liosno." "I informed myself from sensible inhabitants" as well as nobles, merchants, and villagers "about the manner of life of the jews, their occupations, their deceptions and all their pettifogging with which … they provide the poor dumb villages with hunger; and on the other hand, by what means one could protect them from the common pack and how to facilitate for them an honorable and respectable way out … to enable them to become useful citizens.

Afterwards, in the autumn months, Derzhavin described many evil practices of the Polish landlords and jewish leasers in his "Memorandum on the mitigation of famine in White Russia and on the lifestyles of the jews," which he also made known to the czar and the highest officials of state. This *Memorandum* is a very comprehensive document that evaluates the conditions inherited from the Poles as well as the possibilities for overcoming the poverty of the peasants, describing the peculiarities of the jewish way of life of that time and includes a proposal for reform in comparison to Prussia and Austria. The very explicit practical presentation of the recommended measures makes this the first work of an enlightened Russian citizen concerning jewish life in Russia, in those first years in which Russia acquired jews in a large mass. That makes it a work of special interest.

The *Memorandum* consists of two parts: (1) on the residence of White Russian in general (in reviews of the Memorandum we usually find no mention of this important part) and (2) on the jews.

[1] Derzhavin begins by establishing that the agricultural economy was in shambles. The peasants there were "lazy on the job, not clever, they procrastinate every small task and are sluggish in [G47] field work." Year in, year out "they eat unwinnowed corn: in the spring, Kolotucha or Bolotucha from [eggs and] rye meal," in summer they content themselves with a mixture of a small amount of some grain or other with chopped and cooked grass. They are so weakened, that they stagger around."

The local Polish landlords "are not good proprietors. They do not manage the property.. . themselves, but lease it out," a Polish custom. But for the lease "there are no universal rules protecting the peasants from overbearing or to keep the business aspect from falling apart." "Many greedy leasers… by imposing hard work and oppressive taxes bring the people into a bad way and transform them… into poor, homeless peasants.'' This lease is all the worst for being short-term, made for 1-3 years at a time so that the leaser hastens "to get his advantage from it… without regard to the exhausting" of the estate.

The emaciation of the peasants was sometimes even worse: "several landlords that lease the traffic in spirits in their villages to the jews, sign stipulations that the peasants may only buy their necessities from these leasers [triple price]; likewise the peasants may not sell their product to anyone except the jewish lease holder… cheaper than the market price." Thus "they plunge the villagers into misery, and especially when they distribute again their horded grain… they must finally give a double portion; whoever does not do it is punished… the villagers are robbed of every possibility to prosper and be full."

Then he develops in more detail the problem of the liquor distilling. Schnapps was distilled by the landlords, the landed nobility [Szlachta] of the region, the priests, monks, and jews. Of the almost million jews, 2-3,000 live in the villages and live mainly from the liquor traffic. The peasants, "after bringing in the harvest, are sweaty and careless in what they spend; they drink, eat, enjoy themselves, pay the jews for their old debts and then, whatever they ask for drinks. For this reason the shortage is already manifest by winter… In every settlement there is at least one, and in several settlements quite a few taverns built by the landlords, where for their advantage [G48] and that of the jewish lease-holders, liquor is sold day and night… There the jews trick them out of not only the life-sustaining grain, but that which is sown in the field, field implements, household items, health and even their life." And all that is sharpened by the mores of the "koleda…

Jews travel especially during the harvest in autumn through the villages, and after they have made the farmer, along with his whole family, drunk, drive them into debt and take from them every last thing needed to survive…. In that they box the drunkard's ears and plunder him, the villager is plunged into the deepest misery." He lists also other reasons for the impoverishing of the peasants.

Doubtless, behind these fateful distilleries stand the Polish landlords. Proprietor and leaser act in behalf of the owner and attend to making a profit: "to this class" Gessen asserts "belonged not just jews but also Christians" especially priests. But the jews were an irreplaceable, active and very inventive link in the chain of exploitation of these illiterate emaciated peasants that had no rights of their own. If the White Russian settlement had not been injected with jewish tavern managers and leasers, then the wide-spread system of exploitation would not have functioned, and removing the jewish links in the chain would have ended it.

After this Derzhavin recommended energetic measures, as for example for the expurgation of these burdens of peasant life. The landlords would need to attend to this problem. Only they alone who are responsible for the peasants should be allowed to distill liquor "under their own… supervision and not from far-removed places," and to see to it, that "every year a supply of grain for themselves and the peasants" would be on hand, and indeed as much as would be needed for good nutrition. "If the danger arises that this is not done, then the property is to be confiscated for the state coffers." The schnapps distilling is to begin no sooner than the middle of September and end middle of April, i.e. the whole time of land cultivation is to be free of liquor consumption. In addition, the liquor is not to be sold during worship services or at night. The liquor stores should only be permitted "in the main streets, near the markets, mills and establishments where foreigners gather." But all the superfluous and newly-built liquor stores, "whose number has greatly increased since the annexation of [White Russia]… are immediately to cease use for that purpose: the sale of liquor in them to be forbidden." "In villages and out-of-the-way places there should not be any, that the peasant not sink into drunkenness." Jews however should "not be permitted to sell liquor either by the glass or the keg… nor should they be the brew masters in the distilleries," and "they should not be allowed to lease the liquor stores." "Koledas" are also to be forbidden; as well as the short-term leasing of operations. By means of exacting stipulations "the leaser is to be prevented from working an operation into the ground." Under threat of punishment is market abuse to be forbidden, by which the landlords "do not permit their peasants to buy what they need somewhere else," or "to sell their surplus somewhere other than to their proprietor." There were still other economic proposals: "in

this manner the scarcity of food can in the future be prevented in the White Russian Province."

[2] In the second part of the *Memorandum*, Derzhavin, going out from the task given by the Senate, submitted a suggestion for the transformation of the life of the jews in the Russian Kingdom– not in isolation, but rather in the context of the misery of White Russia and with the goal to improve the situation. But here he set himself the assignment to give a brief overview of jewish history, especially the Polish period in order to explain the current customs of the jews. Among others, he used his conversations with the Berlin-educated enlightened jew, physician Ilya Frank, who put his thoughts down in writing. "The jewish popular teachers mingle 'mystic-talmudic' pseudo-exegesis of the Bible with the true spirit of the teachings… They expound strict laws with the goal of isolating the jews from other peoples and to instill a deep hatred against every other religion… Instead of cultivating a universal virtue, they contrive… an empty ceremony of honoring God… The moral character of the jews has changed in the last century to their disadvantage, [G50] and in consequence they have become pernicious subjects… In order to renew the jews morally and politically, they have to be brought to the point of returning to the original purity of their religion… The jewish reform in Russia must begin with the foundation of public schools, in which the Russian, German and jewish languages would be taught." What kind of prejudice is it to believe that the assimilation of secular knowledge is tantamount to a betrayal of religion and folk and that working the land is not suitable for a jew? Derzhavin declined in his *Memorandum* a suggestion by Nota Chaimovitsh Notkin, a major merchant from Shklov, whom he had also met. Although Notkin demurred from the most important conclusions and suggestions of Derzhavin that had to do with jews, he was at the same time in favor, if possible, of excluding the jews from the production of liquor; and saw it as needful for them to get an education and pursue a productive career, preferably working with their hands, whereby he also held out the possibility of emigration "into the fruitful steppe for the purpose of raising sheep and crops."

Following the explanation of Frank who rejected the power of the Kehilot, Derzhavin proceeded from the same general consequences: "The original principles of pure worship and ethics" [of the jews] had been transformed into "false concepts," by which the simple jewish people "is misled, and constantly *is* so led, so much so that between them and those of other faiths a wall has been built that cannot be broken through, which has been made firm, a wall that firmly binds [the jews] together and, surrounded by darkness, separates them from their fellow citizens." Thus in raising their children "they pay plenty for Talmud instruction – and that without time limit… As long as the students continue in their current conditions, there is no prospect for a change in their ways…. They believe themselves to be the true worshippers of God, and despise everyone of a different faith… There the people are brought to a constant expectation of the Messiah… [They believe] that their Messiah, by overthrowing all earthlings will rule over them in flesh and blood and restore to them their former kingdom, fame and glory." Of the youths he wrote: "they marry all too young, sometimes before they reach ten years old, and though nubile, they are [G51] not strong enough." Regarding the Kahal system: the inner-jewish collection of levies provides "to the Kehilot every year an enviable sum of income that is incomparably higher than the state taxes that are raised from individuals in the census lists. The Kahal elders do not excuse anyone from the accounting. As a result, their poor masses find themselves in the condition

of severe emaciation and great poverty, and there are many of them… In contrast, the members of the kahal are rich, and live in superfluity; by ruling over both levers of power, the spiritual and secular,… they have a great power over the people. In this way they hold.them … in great poverty and fear." The Kehilot "issues to the people every possible command… which must be performed with such exactitude and speed, that one can only wonder."

Derzhavin identified the nub of the problem thusly: "[the jews'] great numbers in White Russia … is itself a heavy burden for the land on account of the disproportion to that of the crop farmers… This disproportion is the outstanding one of several important reasons that produces here a shortage of grain and other edible stores… Not one of them was a crop farmer at that time, yet each possessed and gobbled up more grain than the peasant with his large family, who had harvested it by the sweat of his brow… Above all, in the villages they … are occupied in giving the peasant all their necessities on credit, at an extraordinary rate of interest; and thus the peasant, who at some time or other became a debtor to them, can no longer get free of it." Arching over this are the "frivolous landlords that put their villages into jewish hands, not just temporarily but permanently." The landowners however are happy to be able to shift everything on to the jews: "according to their own words, they regard the Jews as the sole reason for the wasting of the peasants" and the landlord only rarely acknowledges "that he, if they were removed from his holdings, would suffer no small loss, since he receives from them no small income from the lease."

Thus Derzhavin did not neglect to examine the matter from a variety of angles: "In fairness to [the jews] we must point out [G52] also that during this grain shortage they have taken care to feed not a few hungry villagers—though everyone also knows that that came with a bill: upon the harvest being brought in, they will get it back 100-fold." In a private report to the Attorney General, Derzhavin wrote, "It is hard not to err by putting all the blame on one side. The peasants booze away their grain with the jews and suffer under its shortage. The landholders cannot forbid drunkenness, for they owe almost all their income to the distilling of liquor. And all the blame cannot be placed even on the jews, that they take the last morsel of bread away from the peasant to earn their own life sustenance."

To Ilya Frank, Derzhavin once said, "since the providence of this tiny scattered people has preserved them until the present, we too must take care for their protection." And in his report he wrote with the uprightness of that time, "if the Most High Providence, to the end of some unknown purpose, leaves (on account of His purposes) this dangerous people to live on the earth, then governments under whose scepter they have sought protection must bear it… They are thus obligated extend their protection to the jews, so that they may be useful both to themselves and to the society in which they dwell."

Because of all his observations in White Russia, and of his conclusion, and of all he wrote in the *Memorandum*, and especially because of all these lines, and probably also because he "praised the keen vision of the great Russian monarchs" "which forbade the immigration and travel of these clever robbers into their realm," is Derzhavin spoken of as "a fanatical enemy of jews," a great Anti-Semite. He is accused – though unjustly, as we have seen – of "imputing the drunkenness and poverty of the White Russian peasant exclusively to the

jews," and his "positive measures" were characterized as given without evidence, to serve his personal ambition.

But that he was in no wise prejudiced against the jews, is indicated in that (1) his whole *Memorandum* emerged in 1800 in response to the [G53] actual misery and hunger of the peasants, (2) the goal was to do well by both the White Russian peasant and the jews, (3) he distinguished them *economically* and (4) his desire was to orient the jews toward a real productive activity, of whom, as Catherine planned, a part first and foremost was supposed to have been relocated in territories that were not closed.

As a critical difficulty Derzhavin saw the instability and transientness of the jewish population, of which scarcely 1/6 was included in the census. "Without a special, extraordinary effort it is difficult to count them accurately, because, being in cities, shtetl, manor courts, villages, and taverns, they constantly move back and forth, they do not identify themselves as local residents, but as guests that are here from another district or colony." Moreover, "they all look alike… and have the same name," and have no surname; and "not only that, all wear the same black garments: one cannot distinguish them and misidentifies them when they are registered or identified, especially in connection with judicial complaints and investigations." Therein the Kehilot takes care not "to disclose the real number, in order not unduly to burden their wealthy with taxes for the number registered."

Derzhavin sought however a comprehensive solution "to reduce [the number of jews in the White Russian villages]… without causing damage to anyone and thus to ease the feeding of the original residents; yet at the same time, for those that should remain, to provide better and less degrading possibilities for earning their sustenance." In addition, he probed how to "reduce their fanaticism and, without retreating in the slightest from the rule of toleration toward different religions, to lead them by a barely-noticed way to enlightenment; and after expunging their hatred of people of other faiths, above all to bring them to give up their besetting intention of stealing foreign goods." The goal was to find a way to separate the *freedom of religious conscience* from *freedom from punishment of evil deeds*.

Thereafter he laid out by layers and explicitly the measures to be recommended, and in doing so gave proof of his economic and statesmanlike competence. First, "that [the jews] should have no occasion [G54] for any kind of irritation, to send them into flight or even to murmur quietly," they are to be reassured of protection and favor by a manifest of the czar, in which should be strengthened the principle of tolerance toward their faith and the maintenance of the privileges granted by Catherine, "only with one small change to the previous principles." (But those "that will not submit to these principles shall be given the freedom to emigrate" – a demand that far exceeded in point of freedom the 20th century Soviet Union). Immediately thereafter it states: after a specific time interval, after which all new credit is temporarily forbidden, all claims of debt between jews and Christians to be ordered, documented, and cleared "in order to restore the earlier relation of trust so that in the future not the slightest obstruction should be found for the transformation of the jews to a different way of life… for the relocation into other districts" or in the old places, "for the assignment of a new life conditions." Free of debt, the jews are thus to be made as soon as possible into freemen for the Reforms." From the vantage point of the publication of the

Manifest are all dues assessed by jews "for the equalization of debt of poor people" is to applied to poor jews, to deflect the payment of Kahal debts or for the furnishings for migrants. From the one group, no tax is to be levied for three years — from the other, for six years—, and instead, that money is to be dedicated to the setting up of factories and work places for these jews. Landowners must abandon obligating jews in their shtetls to set up various factories and instead begin on their estates to cultivate grain, "in order that they may earn their bread with their own hands," but "under no circumstance is liquor to be sold anywhere, secretly or openly," or these landholders would themselves lose their rights to the production of liquor. It was also a non-negotiable to carry out a universal, exact census of the population under responsibility of the Kahal elders. For those that had no property to declare as merchant or townsman, two new classes were to be created with smaller income: village burghers and "colonist" (where "the denotation 'krestyanin' [farmer] would not be used because of its similarity to the word 'Christian'"). The jewish settlers would have to be regarded as "free and not as serfs," but "under no condition or pretext may they dare to take Christian man- or maid-servants, they may not own a single Christian peasant, nor to expand themselves into the domain of magistrates and town fathers, so that they not gain any special rights over Christians." "After they have declared their wish to be enrolled in a particular status," then must "the necessary number of young men" be sent to Petersburg, Moscow, or Riga – one group "to learn the keeping of merchant books," second to learn a trade, the third to attend schools "for agriculture and land management." Meanwhile "some energetic and precise jews should be selected as deputies… for all these areas where land is designated for colonization." (There follows minutiae on the arrangements of plans, surveying the land, housing construction, the order to release different groups of settlers, their rights in transit, the grace-period in which they would remain tax-free – all these details that Derzhavin laid out so carefully we pass by.) On the inner ordering of the jewish congregation:: "in order to place the jews …under the secular authorities … just the same as everyone else, the Kehilot may not continue in any form." Together with the abolishment of the Kehilot is "likewise abolished all previous profiteering assessments, which the Kehilot raised from the jewish people… and at the same time, the secular taxes are to be assessed… as with the other subjects" (i.e. not doubled), and "the schools and synagogues must be protected by laws." "The males may not marry younger than 17 nor the females than 15 years." Then there is a section on education and enlightenment of the jews. The jewish schools to the 12th year, and thereafter the general schools, are to become more like those of other religions; "those however that have achieved distinction in the high sciences are to be received in the academies and universities as honorary associates, doctors, professors" – but "they are not… to be taken into the rank of officers and staff officers," because "although they may also be taken into the military service, they will e.g. "not take up arms against the enemy on Saturday, which in fact often does happen." Presses for jewish books are to be constructed. Along with synagogues are to be constructed jewish hospitals, poor houses, and orphanages.

[G56]Thus Derzhavin concluded quite self-consciously: "thus, this cross-grained [scattered] people known as jews… in this its sad condition will observe an example of order." Especially regarding enlightenment: "This first point will bear fruit — if not today and immediately, definitely in the coming times, or at worst after several generations, in unnoticed way," and then the jews would become "genuine subjects of the Russian throne."

While Derzhavin was composing his *Memorandum*, he also made it known what the Kehilot thought about it, and made it clear that he was by no means making himself their friend. In the official answers their rejection was formulated cautiously. It stated, "the jews are not competent for cultivating grain nor accustomed to it, and their faith is an obstacle… They see no other possibilities than their current occupations, which serve their sustenance, and they do not need such, but would like to remain in their current condition." The Kehilot saw moreover, that the report entailed their own obsolescence, the end of their source of income, and so began, quietly, but stubbornly and tenaciously, to work against Derzhavin's whole proposal.

This opposition expressed itself, according to Derzhavin, by means of a complaint filed by a jewess from Liosno to the Czar, in which she alleged that, in a liquor distillery, Derzhavin "horrifically beat her with a club, until she, being pregnant, gave birth to a dead infant." The Senate launched an investigation. Derzhavin answered: "As I was a quarter hour long in this factory, I not only did not strike any jewess, but indeed did not even see one." He sought a personal reception by the czar. "Let me be imprisoned, but I will reveal the idiocy of the man that has made such claims… How can your Highness… believe such a foolish and untrue complaint?" (The jew that had taken the lying complaint was condemned to one year in the penitentiary, but after 2 or 3 months Derzhavin "accomplished" his being set free, this being now under the reign of Alexander I.)

Paul, murdered in May 1801, was unable to come to any resolution in connection with Derzhavin's *Memorandum*. "It led [G57] at the time to small practical results, as one could have expected, since Derzhavin lost his position in the change of court."

Not until the end of 1802 was the "committee for the assimilation of the Jews" established, to examine Derzhavin's *Memorandum* and prepare corresponding recommendations. The committee consisted of two Polish magnates close to Alexander I: Prince **Adam [Jerzy] Czartoryski** and Count (Graf) **Severin Potocki** as well as Count **Valerian Subov**. (Derzhavin observed regarding all three, that they too had great holdings in Poland, and would notice "a significant loss of income" if the jews were to be removed, and that "the private interests of the above-mentioned Worthies would outweigh those of the state.") Also on the committee were Interior Minister Count **Kotshubey** and the already-mentioned Justice Minister – the first in Russian history – Derzhavin himself. **Michael Speransky** also worked with the committee. The committee was charged to invite jewish delegates form the Kehiloth of every province and these – mostly merchants of the First Guild – did come. "Besides that the committee members had the right to call enlightened and well-meaning jews of their acquaintance." The already-known **Nota Notkin**, that had moved from White Russia to Moscow and then St Petersburg; the Petersburg tax-leaser **Abram Perets**, who was a close friend of Speransky; [Yehuda] **Leib Nevachovich** and Mendel Satanaver, — both friends of Perets – and others. Not all took part in the hearings, but they exercised a significant influence on the committee members. Worthy of mention: Abram Perets' son Gregory was condemned in the **Decembrist** trial and exiled – probably only because he had discussed the Jewish Question with [Pavel] **Pestel**, but without suspecting anything of the Decembrist conspiracy – [G58] and because his grandson was the Russian Secretary of State, a very high position. Nevachovich, a humanist (but no cosmopolitan) who was deeply tied to Russian cultural life – then a rarity among jews – published in Russian "The Crying Voice of the

Daughter of Judah" (1803) in which he urged Russian society to reflect on the restrictions of jewish rights, and admonished the Russians to regard jews as their countrymen, and thus that they should take the jews among them into Russian society.

The committee came to an overwhelmingly-supported resolution: "[The jews] are to be guided into the general civil life and education… To steer them toward productive work," it should be made easier for them to become employed in trades and commerce, the constriction of the right of free mobility should be lessened; they must become accustomed to wearing ordinary apparel, for "the custom of wearing clothes that are despised strengthens the custom to be despised." But the most acute problem was that jews, on account of the liquor trade, dwelled in the villages. Notkin "strove to win the committee to the view of letting the jews continue to live there, and only to take measures against possible abuses on their part."

"The charter of the committee led to tumult in the Kehiloth," Gessen wrote. A special convocation of their deputies in 1803 in Minsk resolved "to petition our czar, may his fame become still greater, that they (the Worthies) assume no innovations for us." They decided to send certain delegates to Petersburg, explained, that an assembly had been held for that purpose, and even called for a three-day jewish fast – "unrest …gripped the whole pale of settlement. Quite apart from the threatening expulsion of jews from the villages, "the Kehiloth took a negative stance toward the cultural question…out of concern to preserve their own way of life." As answer to the main points of the Recommendation "the Kehiloth explained that the Reform must in any case be postponed 15-20 years."

Derzhavin wrote "there were from their side various rebuttals aimed to leave everything as it was. In addition, Gurko, a White Russian landowner sent Derzhavin a letter he had received: [G59] a jew in White Russia had written him regarding one of his plenipotentiaries in Petersburg. It said that they had, in the name of all Kehilot of the world, put the cherem ([or herem,] i.e. the ban) on Derzhavin as a Persecutor, and had gathered a million to be used as gifts for this situation and had forwarded it to St Petersburg. They appealed for all efforts to be applied to the removal of Derzhavin as Attorney General, and if that were not possible to seek his life… However the thing they wanted to achieve was not to be forbidden to sell liquor in the village taverns…. and in order to make it easier to advance this business," they would put together opinions from foreign regions, from different places and peoples, on how the situation of the jews could be improved" – and in fact, such opinions, sometimes in French, sometimes, in German, began to be sent to the Committee.

Besides this, Nota Notkin became "the central figure that organized the little jewish congregation of Petersburg." In 1803 "he submitted a brief to the Committee in which he sought to paralyze the effect of the proposal submitted by Derzhavin." Derzhavin writes, "Notkin came to him one day and asked, with feigned well-wishing, that he, Derzhavin, should not take a stand all alone against his colleagues on the Committee, who all are on the side of the jews; whether he would not accept 100- or, if that is too little, 200,000 rubles, only so that he could be of one mind with all his colleagues on the committee." Derzhavin "decided to disclose this attempt at bribery to the czar and prove it to him with Gurko's letter." He "thought such strong proofs prove effective and the czar would start to be wary of the people that surrounded him and protected the jews." Speransky also informed the

czar of it, but “Speransky was fully committed to the jews,” and – “from the first meeting of the Jewish Committee it became apparent that all members represented the view that the liquor distilling should … continue in the hands of jews as before.”

Derzhavin opposed it. Alexander bore himself ever more coldly toward him and dismissed his Justice Minister shortly thereafter (1803).

Beside this, Derzhavin’s papers indicate that he – whether in military or civil service – always came into disfavor and was hot-headed and everywhere soon took his leave.

[G60] One has to admit, that Derzhavin foresaw much that developed in the problematic Russo-Judaic relationship throughout the entire 19th century, even if not in the exact and unexpected form that it took in the event. He expressed himself coarsely, as was customary then, but he did not intend to oppress the jews; on the contrary, he wanted to open to the jews paths to a more free and productive life.

Chapter 2

During the Reign of Alexander 1st

At the end of 1804, the Committee in charge of the Organisation of the Jews concluded its work by drafting a "Regulation on Jews" (known as the "Regulation of 1804"), the first collection of laws in Russia concerning Jews. The Committee explained that its aim was to improve the condition of the Jews, to direct them towards a useful activity "by opening this path exclusively for their own good… and by discarding anything that might divert them from it, without calling for coercive measures."[1] The Regulation established the principle of equal civil rights for Jews (Article 42): "All Jews who live in Russia, who have recently settled there, or who have come from foreign countries for their commercial affairs, are free and are under the strict protection of the laws in the same way other Russian subjects are." (In the eyes of Professor Gradovsky, "We can not but see in this article the desire to assimilate this people to the whole population of Russia."[2])

The Regulation gave the Jews greater opportunities than Derzhavin's original proposals; thus, in order to create textile or leather factories, or to move to agricultural economy on virgin lands, it proposed that a government subsidy be directly paid. Jews were given the right to acquire land without serfs, but with the possibility of hiring Christian workers. Jews who owned factories, merchants, and craftsmen had the right to leave the Pale of Settlement "for a time, for business purposes," thus easing the borders of this newly established area. (All that was promised for the current of the coming year was the abrogation of double royalties[*], but it soon disappeared.) All the rights of the Jews were reaffirmed: the inviolability of their property, individual liberty, the profession of their religion, their community organisation – in other words, the *Kehalim* system was left without significant changes (which, in fact, undermined the idea of a fusion of the Jewish world within the Russian state): the *Kehalim* retained their old right to collect royalties, which conferred on them a great authority, but without the ability of increasing them; Religious punishments and anathemas (*Herem*) were forbidden, which assured liberty to the *Hassidim*. In accordance with the wishes of the *Kehalim*, the project of establishing Jewish schools of general education was abandoned, but "all Jewish children are allowed to study with other children without discrimination in all schools, colleges, and all Russian universities," and in these establishments no child "shall be under any pretext deviated from his religion or forced to study what might be contrary or opposed to him." Jews "who, through their abilities, will attain a meritorious level in universities in medicine, surgery, physics, mathematics, and other disciplines, will be recognised as such and promoted to university degrees." It was considered essential that the Jews learn the language of their region, change their external appearance and adopt family names. In conclusion, the Committee pointed out that in other countries "nowhere were used means so liberal, so measured, and so appropriate to the needs of the Jews." J. Hessen agrees that the Regulation of 1804 imposed fewer restrictions on Jews than the Prussian Regulations of 1797. Especially since the Jews possessed and retained their individual liberty, which a mass of several million Russian peasants subjected to serfdom did not enjoy.[3] "The Regulation of 1804 belongs to the number of acts imbued with the spirit of tolerance."[4]

The Messenger of Europe, one of the most read journals of the times wrote: "Alexander knows that the vices we attribute to the Jewish nation are the inevitable consequences of oppression that has burdened it for many centuries. The goal of the new law is to give the State useful citizens, and to Jews a homeland."[5]

However, the Regulation did not resolve the most acute problem in accordance with the wishes of all Jews, namely the Jewish population, the *Kehalim* deputies, and the Jewish collaborators of the Committee. The Regulation stipulated that: "No one among the Jews… in any village or town, can own any form of stewardship of inns or cabarets, under their name nor under the name of a third party, nor are they allowed to sell alcohol or live in such places"[6] and proposed that the entire Jewish population leave the countryside within three years, by the beginning of 1808. (We recall that such a measure had already been advocated under Paul in 1797, even before the Derzhavin project appeared: not that all Jews without exception were to be distanced from the villages, but in order that "by its mass, the Jewish population in the villages would not exceed the economic possibilities of the peasants as a productive class, it is proposed to reduce the number of them in the agglomerations of the districts."[7] This time it was proposed to direct the majority of the Jews to

agricultural labour in the virgin lands of the Pale of Settlement, New Russia, but also the provinces of Astrakhan and the Caucasus, exonerating them for ten years of the royalties they up to then had to pay, "with the right to receive a loan from the Treasury for their enterprises" to be reimbursed progressively after ten years of franchise; to the most fortunate, it was proposed to acquire land in personal and hereditary ownership with the possibility of having them exploited by agricultural workers."[8]

In its refusal to allow distillation, the Committee explained: "As long as this profession remains accessible to them… which, in the end, exposes them to the recriminations, contempt, and even hatred of inhabitants, the general outcry towards them will not cease."[9] Moreover, "Can we consider this measure [of removing the Jews from villages] as repressive when they are offered so many other means not only to live in ease, but also to enrich themselves in agriculture, industry, crafts; and that they are also given the possibility of possessing land in full ownership? How could this people be regarded as oppressed by the abolition of a single branch of activity in a State in which they are offered a thousand other activities in fertile, uninhabited areas suitable for the cultivation of cereals and other agricultural production…?"[10]

These are compelling arguments. However, Hessen finds that the text of the Committee testifies to "a naive look… on the nature of the economic life of a people [consisting in] believing that economic phenomena can be changed in a purely mechanical way, by decree."[11] From the Jewish side, the projected relocation of the Jews from villages and the ban imposed on them on making alcohol, the "secular occupation" of the Jews[12], was perceived as a terribly cruel decision. (And it was in these terms that it was condemned by Jewish historiography fifty and even a hundred years later.)

Given the liberal opinions of Alexander I, his benevolence towards the Jews, his perturbed character, his weak will (without a doubt forever broken by his accession to the throne at the cost of his father's violent death), it is unlikely that the announced deportation of the Jews would have been energetically conducted; even if the reign had followed a peaceful course, it would have undoubtedly been spread out over time.

But soon after the adoption of the 1804 Regulations, the threat of war in Europe was outlined, followed by the application of measures favouring the Jews by Napoleon, who united a Sanhedrin of Jewish deputies in Paris. "The whole Jewish problem then took an unexpected turn. Bonaparte organised in Paris a meeting of the Jews whose main aim was to offer the Jewish nation various advantages and to create a link between the Jews scattered throughout Europe. Thus, in 1806, Alexander I ordered a new committee to be convened to "examine whether special steps should be taken, and postpone the relocation of the Jews."[13]

As announced in 1804, the Jews were supposed to abandon the villages by 1808. But practical difficulties arose, and as early as 1807 Alexander I received several reports highlighting the necessity of postponing the relocation. An imperial decree was then made public, "requiring all Jewish societies… to elect deputies and to propose through them the means which they consider most suitable for successfully putting into practice the measures contained in the Regulation of December 9th, 1804." The election of these Jewish deputies took place in the western provinces, and their views were transmitted to St. Petersburg. "Of course, these deputies expressed the opinion that the departure of the Jews residing in the villages had to be postponed to a much later time. (One of the reasons given was that, in the villages, the innkeepers had free housing, whereas in towns and cities, they would have to pay for them). The Minister of Internal Affairs wrote in his report that "the relocation of Jews currently residing in villages to land belonging to the State will take several decades, given their overwhelming number."[14] Towards the end of 1808, the Emperor gave orders to suspend the article prohibiting the Jews from renting and producing alcohol, and to leave the Jews where they lived, "until a subsequent ruling."[15] Immediately afterwards (1809) a new committee, said "of the Senator Popov", was instituted for the study of all problems and the examination of the petitions formulated by the Jewish deputies. This Committee "considered it indispensable" to put an "energetic" end to the relocation of the Jews and to retain the right to the production and trade of vodka.[16] The Committee worked for three years and presented its report to the Emperor in 1812. Alexander I did not endorse this report: he did not wish to undermine the importance of the previous decision and had in no way lost his desire to act in favour of the peasants: "He was ready to soften the measure of expulsion, but not to renounce it."[17] Thereupon the Great War broke out with Napoleon, followed by the European war, and Alexander's

concerns changed purpose. Since then, displacement out of the villages never was initiated as a comprehensive measure in the entire Pale of Settlement, but at most in the form of specific decisions in certain places.[18]

During the war, according to a certain source, the Jews were the only inhabitants not to flee before the French army, neither in the forests nor inland; in the neighbourhood of Vilnius, they refused to obey Napoleon's order to join his army, but supplied him forage and provisions without a murmur; nevertheless, in certain places it was necessary to resort to requisitions.[19] Another source reports that "the Jewish population suffered greatly from the abuses committed by Napoleon's soldiers," and that "many synagogues were set on fire," but goes even further by stating that "Russian troops were greatly helped by what was called the "Jewish post," set up by Jewish merchants, which transmitted the information with a celerity unknown at the time (inns serving as 'relay')"; they even "used Jews as couriers for the connections between the various detachments of the Russian army." When the Russian army reassumed possession of the land, "the Jews welcomed the Russian troops with admiration, bringing bread and alcohol to the soldiers." The future Nicholas I, Grand Duke at that time, noted in his diary: "It is astonishing that they [Jews] remained surprisingly faithful to us in 1812 and even helped us where they could, at the risk of their lives."[20] At the most critical point of the retreat of the French at the passage of Berezina, the local Jews communicated to the Russian command the presumed crossing point; this episode is well known. But it was in fact a successful ruse of General Laurançay: he was persuaded that the Jews would communicate this information to the Russians, and the French, of course, chose another crossing point.[21]

After 1814, the reunification of central Poland brought together more than 400,000 Jews. The Jewish problem was then presented to the Russian government with more acuteness and complexity. In 1816, the Government Council of the Kingdom of Poland, which in many areas enjoyed a separate state existence, ordered the Jews to be expelled from their villages—they could also remain there, but only to work the land, and this without the help of Christian workers. But at the request of the *Kahal* of Warsaw, as soon as it was transmitted to the Emperor, Alexander gave orders to leave the Jews in place by allowing them to engage in the trade of vodka, on the sole condition that they should not sell it *on credit*.[22]

It is true that in the Regulations published by the Senate in 1818, the following provisions are again found: "To put an end to the coercive measures of proprietors, which are ruinous for the peasants, for non-repayment of their debts to the Jews, which forces them to sell their last possessions… Regarding the Jews who run inns, it is necessary to forbid them to lend money at interest, to serve vodka on credit, to then deprive the peasants of their livestock or any other things that are indispensable to them."[23] Characteristic trait of the entirety of Alexander's reign: no spirit of continuation in the measures taken; the regulations were promulgated but there was no effective control to monitor their implementation. Same goes with the statute of 1817 with regard to the tax on alcohol: in the provinces of Great Russia, distillation was prohibited to the Jews; however, as early as 1819, this prohibition was lifted "until Russian artisans have sufficiently perfected themselves in this trade."[24]

Of course, Polish owners who were too concerned by their profits opposed the eradication of Jewish distilleries in the rural areas of the western provinces; and, at that time, the Russian Government did not dare act against them. However, in the Chernigov province where their establishment was still recent, the successful removal of the distilleries in the hands of owners and Jews was undertaken in 1821, after the governor reported following a bad harvest that "the Jews hold in hard bondage the peasants of the Crown and Cossacks."[25] A similar measure was taken in 1822 in the province of Poltava; in 1823 it was partially extended to the provinces of Mogilev and Vitebsk. But its expansion was halted by the pressing efforts of the *Kehalim*.

Thus, the struggle led over the twenty-five year reign of Alexander against the production of alcohol by the transplantation of the Jews out of villages gave little results.

But distilling was not the only type of production in the Pale of Settlement. Owners leased out various assets in different sectors of the economy, here a mill, there fishing, elsewhere bridges, sometimes a whole property, and in this way not only peasant serfs were leased (such cases multiplied from the end of the eighteenth century onwards[26]), but also the "serfs" churches, that is to say orthodox churches, as several authors point out: N. I. Kostomarov, M. N.

Katkov, V. V. Choulguine. These churches, being an integral part of an estate, were considered as belonging to the Catholic proprietor, and in their capacity as operators, the Jews considered themselves entitled to levy money on those who frequented these churches and on those who celebrated private offices. For baptism, marriage, or funeral, it was necessary to receive the authorisation of "a Jew for a fee"; "the epic songs of Little Russia bursts with bitter complaints against the 'Jewish farmers' who oppress the inhabitants."[27]

The Russian governments had long perceived this danger: the rights of the farmers were likely to extend to the peasant himself and directly to his work, and "the Jews should not dispose of the personal labour of the peasants, and by means of a lease, although not being Christians, become owners of peasant serfs"—which was prohibited on several occasions both by the decree of 1784 and by the ordinances of the Senate of 1801 and 1813: "the Jews cannot possess villages or peasants, nor dispose of them under any name whatsoever."[28]

However, the ingenuity of the Jews and the owners managed to circumvent what was forbidden. In 1816, the Senate discovered that "the Jews had found a means of exercising the rights of owners under the name of *krestentsia*, that is to say, after agreement with the owners, they harvest the wheat and barley sown by the peasants, these same peasants must first thresh and then deliver to the distilleries leased to these same Jews; they must also watch over the oxen that are brought to graze in their fields, provide the Jews with workers and wagons… Thus the Jews dispose of all these areas… while the landlords, receiving from them substantial rent referred to as *krestentsia*, sell to the Jews all the harvest to come that are sown on their lands: one can conclude from this that they condemn their peasants to famine."[29]

It is not the peasants who are, so to speak, claimed as such, but only the *krestentsia*, which does not prevent the result from being the same.

Despite all the prohibitions, the practice of the *krestentsia* continued its crooked ways. Its extreme intricacy resulted from the fact that many landowners fell into debt with their Jewish farmers, receiving money from them on their estate, which enabled the Jews to dispose of the estate and the labour of the serfs. But when, in 1816, the Senate decreed that it was appropriate "to take the domains back from the Jews," he charged them to recover on their own the sums they had lent. The deputies of the *Kehalim* immediately sent a humble petition to his Majesty, asking him to annul this decree: the general administrator in charge of foreign faith affairs, the Prince N.N. Golitsyn, convinced the Emperor that "inflicting punishment on only one category of offenders with the exception" of owners and officials. The landlords "could still gain if they refuse to return the capital received for the *krestentsia* and furthermore keep the *krestentsia* for their profit"; if they have abandoned their lands to the Jews in spite of the law, they must now return the money to them.[30]

The future Decembrist P. I. Pestel, at that time an officer in the western provinces, was by no means a defender of the autocracy, but an ardent republican; he recorded some of his observations on the Jews of this region, which were partially included in the preamble to his government programme ("Recommendations for the Provisional Supreme Government"): "Awaiting the Messiah, the Jews consider themselves temporary inhabitants of the country in which they find themselves, and so they never, on any account, want to take care of agriculture, they tend to despise even the craftsmen, and only practice commerce." "The spiritual leaders of the Jews, who are called rabbis, keep the people in an incredible dependence by forbidding them, in the name of faith, any reading other than that of the Talmud… A people that does not seek to educate itself will always remain a prisoner of prejudice"; "the dependence of the Jews in relation to the rabbis goes so far that any order given by the latter is executed piously, without a murmur." "The close ties between the Jews give them the means to raise large sums of money… for their common needs, in particular to incite different authorities to concession and to all sorts of embezzlements which are useful to them, the Jews." That they readily accede to the condition of possessors, "one can see it ostensibly in the provinces where they have elected domicile. All commerce is in their hands, and few peasants are not, by means of debts, in their power; this is why they terribly ruin the regions where they reside." "The previous government [that of Catherine] has given them outstanding rights and privileges which accentuate the evil they are doing," for example the right not to provide recruits, the right not to announce deaths, the right to distinct judicial proceedings subject to the decisions of the rabbis, and "they also enjoy all the other rights accorded to other Christian ethnic groups"; "Thus, it can be clearly seen that the Jews form within the State, a separate State, and enjoy more extensive rights than Christians themselves." "Such a situation cannot be perpetuated further, for it has led the Jews to show a hostile attitude towards Christians and has placed them in a

situation contrary to the public order that must prevail in the State[31]."

In the final years of Alexander I's reign, economic and other type of prohibitions against Jewish activities were reinforced. In 1818, a Senate decree now forbade that "never may Christians be placed in the service of Jews for debts." [32] In 1819, another decree called for an end to "the works and services that peasants and servants perform on behalf of Jews."[33] Golitsyn, always him, told the Council of Ministers "those who dwell in the houses of the Jews not only forget and no longer fulfil the obligations of the Christian faith, but adopt Jewish customs and rites."[34] It was then decided that "Jews should no longer employ Christians for their domestic service."[35] It was believed that "this would also benefit the needy Jews who could very well replace Christian servants."[36] But this decision was not applied. (This is not surprising: among the urban Jewish masses there was poverty and misery, "for the most part, they were wretched people who could scarcely feed themselves,"[37] but the opposite phenomenon has never been observed: the Jews would hardly work in the service of Christians. Undoubtedly some factors opposed it, but they also apparently had means of subsistence coming from communities between which solidarity reigned.)

However, as early as 1823, Jewish farmers were allowed to hire Christians. In fact, "the strict observance of the decision prohibiting" Christians from working on Jewish lands "was too difficult to put into practice."[38]

During these same years, to respond to the rapid development of the sect of the *soubbotniki*[*] in the provinces of Voronezh, Samara, Tula, and others, measures were taken for the Pale of Settlement to be more severely respected. Thus, "in 1821, Jews accused of 'heavily exploiting' the peasants and Cossacks were expelled from the rural areas of the Chernigov province and in 1822 from the villages of Poltava province."[39]

In 1824, during his journey in the Ural Mountains, Alexander I noticed that a large number of Jews in factories, "by clandestinely buying quantities of precious metals, bribed the inhabitants to the detriment of the Treasury and the manufacturers", and ordered "that the Jews be no longer tolerated in the private or public factories of the mining industry."[40]

The Treasury also suffered from smuggling all along the western frontier of Russia, goods and commodities being transported and sold in both capitals without passing through customs. The governors reported that smuggling was mainly practised by Jews, particularly numerous in the border area. In 1816, the order was given to expel all the Jews from a strip sixty kilometres wide from the frontier and that it be done in the space of three weeks. The expulsion lasted five years, was only partial and, as early as 1821, the new government authorised the Jews to return to their former place of residence. In 1825 a more comprehensive but much more moderate decision was taken: The only Jews liable to deportation were those not attached to the local *Kehalim* or who did not have property in the border area.[41] In other words, it was proposed to expel only intruders. Moreover, this measure was not systematically applied.

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The Regulation of 1804 and its article stipulating the expulsion of the Jews from the villages of the western provinces naturally posed a serious problem to the government: where were they to be transferred? Towns and villages were densely populated, and this density was accentuated by the competition prevailing in small businesses, given the very low development of productive labour. However, in southern Ukraine stretched New Russia, vast, fertile, and sparsely populated.

Obviously, the interest of the state was to incite the mass of non-productive Jews expelled from the villages to go work the land in New Russia. Ten years earlier, Catherine had tried to ensure the success of this incentive by striking the Jews with a double royalty, while totally exempting those who would accept to be grafted to New Russia. But this double taxation (Jewish historians mention it often) was not real, as the Jewish population was not censused, and only the *Kahal* knew the manpower, while concealing the numbers to the authorities in a proportion that possibly reached a good half. (As early as 1808, the royalty ceased to be demanded, and the exemption granted by Catherine no longer

encouraged any Jews to migrate).

This time, and for Jews alone, more than 30,000 hectares of hereditary (but non-private) land was allocated in New Russia, with 40 hectares of State land per family (in Russia the average lot of the peasants was a few hectares, rarely more than ten), cash loans for the transfer and settlement (purchase of livestock, equipment, etc, which had to be repaid after a period of six years, within the following ten years); the prior construction of an izba log house was offered to the settlers (in this region, not only the peasants but even some owners lived in mud houses), to exempt them of royalties for ten years with maintenance of individual freedom (in these times of serfdom) and the protection of the authorities.[42] (The 1804 Regulations having exempted Jews from military service, the cash compensation was included in the royalty fee.)

The enlightened Jews, few at the time (Notkine, Levinson), supported the governmental initiative—"but this result must be achieved through incentives, in no way coercive"—and understood very well the need for their people to move on to productive work.

The eighty years of the difficult saga of Jewish agriculture in Russia are described in the voluminous and meticulous work of the Jew V. N. Nikitin (as a child, he had been entrusted to the cantonists, where he had received his name), who devoted many years to the study of the archives of the enormous unpublished official correspondence between St. Petersburg and New Russia. An abundant presentation interspersed with documents and statistical tables, with tireless repetitions, possible contradictions in the reports made at sometimes very distant times by inspectors of divergent opinions, all accompanied by detailed and yet incomplete tables—none of this has been put in order, and it offers, for our brief exposition, much too dense material. Let us try, however, by condensing the citations, to draw a panorama that is simultaneously broad and clear.

The government's objective, Nikitin admits, in addition to the colonisation programme of unoccupied lands, was to give the Jews more space than they had, to accustom them to productive physical labour, to help guard them from "harmful occupations" by which, "whether they liked it or not, many of them made the life of the peasant serfs even more difficult than it already was." "The government… bearing in mind the improvement of their living conditions, proposed to them to turn to agriculture…; The government… did not seek to attract Jews by promises; on the contrary, it endeavoured that there should be no more than three hundred families transferred each year"[43]; it deferred the transfer so long as the houses were not built on the spot, and invited the Jews, meanwhile, to send some of their men as scouts. Initially, the idea was not bad, but it had not sufficiently taken into account the mentality of the Jewish settlers nor the weak capacities of the Russian administration. The project was doomed in advance by the fact that the work of the earth is an art that demands generations to learn: one cannot attach successfully to the earth people who do not wish it or who are indifferent to it.

The 30,000 hectares allocated to Jews in New Russia remained inalienable for decades. *A posteriori*, the journalist I.G. Orchansky considered that Jewish agriculture could have been a success, but only if Jews had been transferred to the nearby Crown lands of Belarus where the peasant way of life was under their control, before their eyes.[44] Unfortunately, there was scarcely any land there (for example, in the province of Grodno there were only 200 hectares, marginal and infertile lands "where the entire population suffered from poor harvests."[45] At first there were only three dozen families willing to emigrate. The Jews hoped that the expulsion measures from the western provinces would be reported; it had been foreseen in 1804 that its application would extend on three years, but it was slow to begin. The fateful deadline of January 1st, 1808 approaching, they began to leave the villages under escort; from 1806 onwards, there was also a movement in favour of emigration among the Jews, the more so as the rumour indicated the advantages which were connected with it. The demands for emigration then flooded *en masse*: "They rushed there… as it were the Promised Land… ; like their ancestors who left Chaldea in Canaan, entire groups left surreptitiously, without authorisation, and some even without a passport. Some resold the passport they had obtained from other departing groups, and then demanded that they be replaced under the pretext that they had lost it. The candidates for departure "were day by day more numerous," and all "insistently demanded land, housing and subsistence."[46]

The influx exceeded the possibilities of reception of the Support Office of the Jews created in the province of Kherson: time was lacking to build houses, dig wells, and the organisation suffered from the great distances in this

region of the steppes, the lack of craftsmen, doctors, and veterinarians. The government was indiscriminate of the money, the good provisions, and sympathy towards the migrants, but the Governor Richelieu demanded in 1807 that the entrances be limited to 200, 300 families per year, while receiving without limitation those who wished to settle on their own account. “In case of a bad harvest, all these people will have to be fed for several years in a row.” (The poorest settlers were paid daily allowances.) However, the governors of the provinces allowed those over-quota who wished to leave—without knowing the exact number of those who were leaving; hence many vicissitudes along the way, due to misery, sickness, death.[47] Some quite simply disappeared during the trip.

Distances across the steppe (between one hundred and three hundred kilometres between a colony and the Office), the inability of the administration to keep an accurate count and establish a fair distribution, meant that some of the migrants were more helped than others; some complained that they did not receive any compensation or loans. The colony inspectors, too few in numbers, did not have time to take a closer look (they received a miserable wage, had no horses, and walked on foot). After a period of two years of stay, some settlers still had no farm, no seeds, nor bread. The poorest were allowed to leave wherever they pleased, and “those who renounced their condition as farmers recovered their former status as *bourgeois*.” But only a fifth of them returned to their country of origin, and the others wandered (the loans granted to those who had been scratched off the list of settlers were to be considered definitively lost). Some reappeared for a time in the colonies, others disappeared “without looking back or leaving a trace,” the others pounded the pavement in the neighbouring towns “by trading, according to their old habit.”[48]

The many reports of the Office and inspectors provide insight into how the new settlers were operating. To train the settlers who did not know where to start or how to finish, the services of peasants of the Crown were requested; the first ploughing is done for the most part through hired Russians. The habit is taken of “correcting defects by a hired labour.” They sow only a negligible portion of the plot allocated to them, and use poor-quality seeds; one has received specific seeds but does not plough or sow; another, when sowing, loses a lot of seeds, and same goes during harvest. Due to lack of experience, they break tools, or simply resell them. They do not know how to keep the livestock. “They kill cattle for food, then complain that they no longer have any”; they sell cattle to buy cereals; they do not make provision for dried dung, so their izbas, insufficiently heated, become damp; they do not fix their houses, so they fall apart; they do not cultivate vegetable gardens; they heat the houses with straw stored to feed the cattle. Not knowing how to harvest, neither to mow nor to thresh, the colonists cannot be hired in the neighbouring hamlets: no one wants them. They do not maintain the good hygiene of their homes, which favours diseases. They “absolutely did not expect to be personally occupied with agricultural labour, doubtlessly they thought that the cultivation of the land would be assured by other hands; that once in possession of great herds, they would go and sell them at the fairs.” The settlers “hope to continue receiving public aid.” They complain “of being reduced to a pitiable condition,” and it is really so; of having “worn their clothes up to the rope,” and that is the case; but the inspection administration replies: “If they have no more clothes, it is out of idleness, for they do not raise sheep, and sow neither linen nor hemp,” and their wives “neither spin nor weave.” Of course, an inspector concluded in his report, if the Jews cannot handle their operations, it is “by habit of a relaxed life, because of their reluctance to engage in agricultural work and their inexperience,” but he thought it fair to add: “agriculture must be prepared from earliest youth, and the Jews, having lived indolently until 45 to 50 years, are not in a position of transforming themselves into farmers in such a short time.”[49] The Treasury was obliged to spend two to three times more on the settlers than expected, and extensions kept on being demanded. Richelieu maintained that “the complaints come from the lazy Jews, not from the good farmers”; However, another report notes that “unluckily for them, since their arrival, they have never been comforted by an even remotely substantial harvest.”[50]

“In response to the many fragments communicated to St. Petersburg to signal how the Jews deliberately renounced all agricultural work,” the ministry responded in the following way: “The government has given them public aid in the hope that they will become farmers not only in name, but in fact. Many immigrants are at risk, if not incited to work, to remain debtors to the state for a long time.”[51] The arrival of Jewish settlers in New Russia at the expense of the state, uncontrolled and ill-supported by an equipment programme, was suspended in 1810. In 1811 the Senate gave the Jews the right to lease the production of alcohol in the localities belonging to the Crown, but within the limits of the Pale of Settlement. As soon as the news was known in New Russia, the will to remain in agriculture was shaken for many settlers: although they were forbidden to leave the country, some left without any identity papers to become innkeepers in villages dependent on the Crown, as well as in those belonging to landowners. In 1812, it appeared that of the 848

families settled there were in fact only 538; 88 were considered to be on leave (parties earning their living in Kherson, Nikolayev, Odessa, or even Poland); as for the others, they had simply disappeared. This entire programme—"the authoritative installation of families on land"—was something *unprecedented* not only in Russia but in the whole of Europe."[52]

The Government now considered that "in view of the Jews' now proven disgust for the work of the land, seeing that they do not know how to go about it, given the negligence of the inspectors", it appears that the migration has given rise to major disturbances; therefore "the Jews should *be judged indulgently*." On the other hand, "how can we guarantee the repayment of public loans by those who will be allowed to leave their status as farmers, how to palliate, without injuring the Treasury, the inadequacies of those who will remain to cultivate the land, how to alleviate the fate of those people who endured so many misfortunes and are living on the edge?[53] As for the inspectors, they suffered not only from understaffing, a lack of means, and various other shortcomings, but also from their negligence, absenteeism, and delays in the delivery of grain and funds; they saw with indifference the Jews selling their property; there were also abuses: in exchange of payment, they granted permits for long-term absences, including for the most reliable workers in a family, which could quickly lead to the ruin of the farm.

Even after 1810-1812, the situation of the Jewish colonies showed no sign of improvement: "tools lost, broken, or mortgaged by the Jews"; "Oxen, again, slaughtered, stolen, or resold"; "Fields sown too late while awaiting warmth"; use of "bad seeds" and in too close proximity to houses, always on the one and same plot; no groundwork, "sowing for five consecutive years on fields that had only been ploughed once," without alternating the sowing of wheat and potatoes; insufficient harvest from one year to another, "yet again, without harvesting seeds." (But the bad harvests also benefit the immigrants: they are then entitled to time off.) Livestock left uncared for, oxen given for hire or "assigned as carriages… they wore them down, did not nourish them, bartered or slaughtered them to feed themselves, only to say later that they had died of disease." The authorities either provided them with others or let them leave in search of a livelihood. "They did not care to build safe pens to prevent livestock from being stolen during the night; they themselves spent their nights sound asleep; for shepherds, they took children or idlers who did not care for the integrity of the herds"; on feast days or on Saturdays, they left them out to graze without any supervision (moreover, on Saturday, it is forbidden to catch the thieves!). They resented their rare co-religionists, who, with the sweat of their brow, obtained remarkable harvests. The latter incurred the Old Testament curse, the *Herem*, "for if they show the authorities that the Jews are capable of working the land, they will eventually force them to do so." "Few were assiduous in working the land… they had the intent, while pretending to work, to prove to the authorities, by their continual needs, their overall incapacity." They wanted "first and foremost to return to the trade of alcohol, which was re-authorised to their co-religionists." Livestock, instruments, seeds, were supplied to them several times, and new loans for their subsistence were relentlessly granted to them. "Many, after receiving a loan to establish themselves, came to the colonies only at the time of the distribution of funds, only to leave again… with this money to neighbouring towns and localities, in search for other work"; "they resold the plot that had been allocated to them, roamed, lived several months in Russian agglomerations at the most intense moments of agricultural labour, and earned their living… by deceiving the peasants." The inspectors' tables show that half of the families were absent with or without authorisation, and that some had disappeared forever. (An example was the disorder prevailing in the village of Izrae-levka in the province of Kherson, where "the inhabitants, who had come to their own account, considered themselves entitled to practice other trades: they were there only to take advantage of the privileges; only 13 of the 32 families were permanent residents, and again they only sowed to make it seem legitimate, while the others worked as tavern-keepers in neighbouring districts."[54]

The numerous reports of the inspectors note in particular and on several occasions that "the disgust of Jewish women for agriculture… was a major impediment to the success of the settlers." The Jewish women who seemed to have put themselves to work in the fields subsequently diverted from it. "At the occasion of marriages, the parents of Jewish women agreed with their future sons-in-law for them not to compel their wives to carry out difficult agricultural labour, but rather hire workers"; "They agreed to prepare ornaments, fox and hare furs, bracelets, head-dresses, and even pearls, for days of celebrations." These conditions led young men to satisfy the whims of their wives "to the point of ruining their farming"; they go so far as "to indulge in possessing luxurious effects, silks, objects of silver or gold," while other immigrants do not even have clothing for the wintertime. Excessively early marriages make "the Jews multiply significantly faster than the other inhabitants." Then, by the exodus of the young, the families become too little provided for and are incapable of ensuring the work. The overcrowding of several families in houses too scarce

generates uncleanliness and favours scurvy. (Some women take *bourgeois* husbands and then leave colonies forever.[55])

Judging from the reports of the Control Office, the Jews of the various colonies continually complained about the land of the steppes, "so hard it must be ploughed with four pairs of oxen." Complaints included bad harvests, water scarcity, lack of fuel, bad weather, disease generation, hail, grasshoppers. They also complained about the inspectors, but unduly, seeing that upon examination the complaints were deemed unfounded. Immigrants "complain shamelessly of their slightest annoyances," They "ceaselessly increase their demands"—"when it is justified, they are provided for via the Office." On the other hand, they had little reason to complain about limitations to the exercise of their piety or of the number of schools open in the agglomerations (in 1829, for eight colonies, there were forty teachers[56]).

However, as pointed out by Nikitin, in the same steppe, during the same period, in the same virgin lands, threatened by the same locusts, cultivations by German colonists, Mennonites, and Bulgarians had been established. They also suffered from the same bad harvests, the same diseases, but however, most of them always had enough bread and livestock, and they lived in beautiful houses with outbuildings, their vegetable gardens were abundant, and their dwellings surrounded by greenery. (The difference was obvious, especially when the German settlers, at the request of the authorities, came to live in the Jewish settlements to convey their experience and set an example: even from a distance, their properties could be distinguished.)

In the Russian colonies the houses were also better than those of the Jews. (However, Russians had managed to get into debt with some Jews who were richer than them and paid their debts while working in their fields.) The Russian peasants, Nikitin explains, "under the oppression of serfdom, were accustomed to everything… and stoically endured all misfortunes." That is how the Jewish settlers who had suffered losses following various indignities were assisted "by the vast spaces of the steppe that attracted fugitives serfs from all regions… Chased by sedentary settlers, the latter replied by the looting, the theft of cattle, the burning of houses; well received, however, they offered their work and know-how. As reflective and practical men, and by instinct of self-preservation, the Jewish cultivators preferred receiving these fugitives with kindness and eagerness; in return, the latter willingly helped them in ploughing, sowing, and harvesting"; Some of them, to hide better, embraced the Jewish religion. "These cases came to light," in 1820 the government forbade Jews to use Christian labour.[57]

Meanwhile, in 1817, the ten years during which the Jewish settlers were exempt from royalties had passed, and they were now to pay, like the peasants of the Crown. Collective petitions emanating not only from the colonists, but also from public officials, demanded that the privilege should be extended for a further fifteen years.

A personal friend of Alexander I, Prince Golitsyn, Minister of Education and Religious Affairs, also responsible for all problems concerning the Jews, took the decision to exempt them from paying royalties for another five years and to postpone the full repayment of loans up to thirty years. "It is important to note, on the honour of the authorities of St. Petersburg, that no request of the Jews, before and now, has ever been ignored."[58]

Among the demands of the Jewish settlers, Nikitin found one which seemed to him to be particularly characteristic: "Experience has proven, in as much as agriculture is indispensable to humanity, it is considered the most basic of occupations, which demands more physical exertion than ingenuity and intelligence; and, all over the world, those affected to this occupation are those incapable of more serious professions, such as industrialists and merchants; it is the latter category, inasmuch as it demands more talent and education, which contributes more than all others the prosperity of nations, and in all periods it has been accorded far more esteem and respect than that of agricultors. The slanderous representations of the Jews to the government resulted in depriving the Jews of the freedom to exercise their favourite trade—that of commerce—and to force them to change their status by becoming farmers, *the so-called plebs*. Between 1807 and 1809, more than 120,000 people were driven out of villages [where most lived on the alcohol trade], and were forced to settle in uninhabited places." Hence their claim to: "return to them the status of ***bourgeois*** with the right, attested in the passport, to be able to leave without hindrances, according to the wishes of each individual."[59] These are well-weighed and unambiguous formulas. From 1814 to 1823, the farming of Jews did not prosper. The statistical tables show that each registered individual cultivated less than two-thirds of a hectare. As "they tried to cut off the harshest work" (in the eyes of the inspectors), they found compensation in commerce and other miscellaneous trades.[60]

Half a century later, the Jewish journalist I.G. Orchansky proposed the following interpretation: “What could be more natural for the Jews transplanted here to devote themselves to agriculture to have seen a vast field of virgin economic activity, and to have precipitated themselves there with their customary and favourite occupations, which promised in the towns a harvest more abundant than that which they could expect as farmers. Why, then, demand of them that they should necessarily occupy themselves with agricultural labour, which undoubtedly, would not turn out well for them,” considering “the bubbling activity that attracts the Jews in the cities in formation.”[61]

The Russian authorities at that time saw things differently: in time, the Jews “could become useful cultivators,” if they resumed “their status as *bourgeois*, they would only increase the number of parasites in the cities.”[62] On record: 300,000 rubles spent on nine Jewish settlements, a colossal sum considering the value of the currency at the time.

In 1822 the additional five years of royalty exemption had elapsed, but the condition of the Jewish farms still required new franchises and new subsidies: “*the state of extreme poverty of the settlers*” was noted, linked “to their inveterate laziness, disease, mortality, crop failures, and ignorance of agricultural work.”[63]

Nevertheless, the young Jewish generation was gradually gaining experience in agriculture. Recognising that good regular harvests were not in the realm of the impossible, the settlers invited their compatriots from Belarus and Lithuania to join them, all the more since there had been bad harvests there; the Jewish families flocked *en masse*, with or without authorisation, as in 1824, they feared the threat of general expulsion in the western part of the country; In 1821, as we have already mentioned, measures had been taken to put an end to the Jewish distilleries in the province of Chernigov, followed by two or three other regions. The governors of the western provinces let all the volunteers go without much inquiry as to how much land was left in New Russia for the Jews.

From there, it was announced that the possibilities of reception did not exceed 200 families per year, but 1,800 families had already started the journey (some strayed in nature, others settled along the way). From then on, the colonists were refused all state aid (but with ten years exemption of royalties); however, the *Kehalim* were interested in getting the poorest to leave in order to have less royalties to pay, and to a certain extent, they provided those who left with funds from the community. (They encouraged the departure of the elderly, the sick, and large families with few able-bodied adults useful to agriculture; and when the authorities demanded a written agreement from the leavers, they were provided with a list of signatures devoid of any meaning.[64] Of the 453 families who arrived in the neighbourhood of Ekaterinoslav in 1823, only two were able to settle at their own expense. What had pushed them there was the mad hope of receiving public aid, which might have dispensed the newcomers from work. In 1822, 1,016 families flocked to New Russia from Belarus: the colonies were rapidly filled with immigrants to whom provisional hospitality was offered; confinement and uncleanliness engendered diseases.[65]

Also, in 1825, Alexander I prohibited the relocation of the Jews. In 1824 and 1825, following further bad harvests, the Jews were supported by loans (but, in order not to give them too much hope, their origin was concealed: they supposedly came from the personal decision of an inspector, or as a reward for some work). Passports were again issued so that the Jews could settle in towns. As for paying royalties, even for those settled there for eighteen years, it was no longer discussed.[66]

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At the same time, in 1823, “a decree of His Majesty orders… that in the provinces of Byelorussia the Jews shall cease all their distillery activities in 1824, abandon farmhouses and relay stations” and settle permanently “in the towns and agglomerations.” The transfer was implemented. By January 1824, some 20,000 people had already been displaced. The Emperor demanded to see to it that the Jews were “provided with activities and subsistence” during this displacement, “so that, without home base, they would not suffer, under these conditions, of more pressing needs such as that of food.”[67] The creation of a committee composed of four ministers (the fourth “ministerial cabinet” created for Jewish affairs) produced no tangible results either in terms of funding, nor in administrative capacities, nor in the social structure of the Jewish community, which was impossible to rebuild from the outside.

In this, as before in many other domains, the emperor Alexander I appears to us to be weak-willed in his impulses, inconstant and inconsistent with his resolves (as we can see him passive in the face of strengthening secret societies which were preparing to overthrow the throne). But in no case should his decisions be attributed to a lack of respect for the Jews. On the contrary, he was listening to their needs and, even during the war of 1812-14, he had kept at Headquarters the Jewish delegates Zindel Sonnenberg and Leisen Dillon who "defended the interests of the Jews." (Dillon, it is true, was soon to be judged for having appropriated 250,000 rubles of public money and for having extorted funds from landowners.) Sonnenberg, on the other hand, remained for a long time one of Alexander's close friends. On the orders of the Tsar, (1814) a permanent Jewish deputation functioned for a number of years in St. Petersburg, for which the Jews had themselves raised funds, "for there were plans for major secret expenditures within government departments." These deputies demanded that "throughout Russia, the Jews should have the right to engage in the trade, farming, and distillation of spirits", that they be granted "privileges in matters of taxation," that "the backlogs be handed over," that "the number of Jews admitted to be members of the magistrate no longer be limited." The Emperor benevolently listened to them, made promises, but no concrete measures were taken.[68]

In 1817 the English Missionary Society sent the lawyer Louis Weil, an equal rights activist for the Jews, to Russia for the specific purpose of acquainting himself with the situation of the Jews of Russia: he had an interview with Alexander I to whom he handed a note. "Deeply convinced that the Jews represented a sovereign nation, Weil affirmed that all Christian peoples, since they had received salvation of the Jews, were to render to them the highest homage and to show them their gratitude by benefits." In this last period of his life, marked by mystical dispositions, Alexander had to be sensitive to such arguments. Both he and his government were afraid of "touching with an imprudent hand the religious rules" of the Jews. Alexander had great respect for the venerable people of the Old Covenant and was sympathetic to their present situation. Hence his utopian quest to make this people access the New Testament. To this end, in 1817, with the help of the Emperor, the Society of Christians of Israel was created, meaning Jews who converted to Christianity (not necessarily orthodoxy), and because of this enjoyed considerable privileges: they had the right, everywhere in Russia, "to trade and to carry on various trades without belonging to guilds or workshops," and they were "freed, they and their descendants, forever, of any civil and military service." Nevertheless, this society experienced no influx of converted Jews and soon ceased to exist.[69]

The good dispositions of Alexander I in regards to the Jews made him express his conviction to put an end to the accusations of ritual murders which arose against them. (These accusations were unknown in Russia until the division of Poland, from where they came. In Poland they appeared in the sixteenth century, transmitted from Europe where they were born in England in 1144 before resurfacing in the twelfth-thirteenth century in Spain, France, Germany, and Great Britain. Popes and Monarchs fought off these accusations without them disappearing in the fourteenth nor fifteenth century. The first trial in Russia took place in Senno, near Vitebsk, in 1816, was not only stopped "by Her Majesty's decision", but incited the Minister of Religious Affairs, Golitsyn, to send the authorities of all provinces the following injunction: henceforth, not to accuse the Jews "of having put to death Christian children, solely supported by prejudices and without proof."[70] In 1822-1823 another affair of this kind broke out in Velije, also in the province of Vitebsk. However, the court decreed in 1824: "The Jews accused in many uncertain Christian testimonies of having killed this boy, supposedly to collect his blood, must be exonerated of all suspicion."[71]

Nevertheless, in the twenty-five years of his reign, Alexander I did not sufficiently study the question to conceive and put into practice a methodical solution satisfactory to all, regarding the Jewish problem as it was in Russia at the time.

How to act, what to do with this separated people who has not yet grafted onto Russia, and which continues to grow in number, is also the question to which the Decembrist Pestel who opposed the Emperor, sought an answer for the Russia of the future, which he proposed to direct. In *The Truth of Russia* he proposed two solutions. Either make the Jews merge for good in the Christian population of Russia: "Above all, it is necessary to deflect the effect, harmful to Christians, of the close link that unites the Jews amongst themselves or which is directed against Christians, which completely isolates the Jews from all other citizens… Convene the most knowledgeable rabbis and Jewish personalities, listen to their proposals and then take action… If Russia does not expel the Jews, all the more they shouldn't adopt unfriendly attitudes towards Christians." The second solution "would consist in helping the Jews create a separate state in one of the regions of Asia Minor. To this end, it is necessary to establish a gathering point for the Jewish people and

to send several armies to support it" (we are not very far from the future Zionist idea). The Russian and Polish Jews together will form a people of more than two million souls. "Such a mass of men in search of a country will have no difficulty in overcoming obstacles such as the opposition of the Turks. Crossing Turkey from Europe, they will pass into Asiatic Turkey and occupy there enough place and land to create a specifically Jewish state. However, Pestel acknowledges that "such an enormous undertaking requires special circumstances and an entrepreneurial spirit of genius."[72]

Nikita Muravyov, another Decembrist, stipulated in his proposed Constitution that "Jews can enjoy civil rights in the places where they live, but that the freedom to settle in other places will depend on the particular decisions of the People's Supreme Assembly."[73]

Nevertheless, the instances proper to the Jewish population, the *Kehalim*, opposed with all their might the interference of state power and all external influence. On this subject, opinions differ. From the religious point of view, as many Jewish writers explain, living in the diaspora is a historical punishment that weighs on Israel for its former sins. Scattering must be assumed to merit God's forgiveness and the return to Palestine. For this it is necessary to live without failing according to the Law and not to mingle with the surrounding peoples: that is the ordeal. But for a liberal Jewish historian of the early twentieth century, "the dominant class, incapable of any creative work, deaf to the influences of its time, devoted all its energies to preserving from the attacks of time, both external and internal, a petrified national and religious life." The *Kahal* drastically stifled the protests of the weakest. "The cultural and educational reform of 1804 confined itself to illusorily blurring the distinctive and foreign character of the Jews, without having recourse to coercion," or even "taking mercy on prejudices"; "these decisions sowed a great disturbance within the *Kahal*… in that they harboured a threat to the power it exercised over the population"; in the Regulation, the most sensitive point for the *Kahal* "was the prohibition of delivering the unruly to the *Herem*," or, even more severe, the observation that "to keep the population in servile submission to a social order, as it had been for centuries, it was forbidden to change garb."[74] But it can not be denied that the *Kehalim* also had reasonable regulative requirements for the life of the Jews, such as the *Khasaki* rule allowing or forbidding the members of the community from taking on a particular type of farming or occupation, which put an end to excessive competition between Jews.[75] "Thou shalt not move the bounds of thy neighbour" (Deuteronomy, XIX, 14).

In 1808, an unidentified Jew transmitted an anonymous note (fearing reprisals from the *Kahal*) to the Minister of Internal Affairs, entitled "Some remarks concerning the management of the life of the Jews." He wrote: "Many do not regard as sacred the innumerable rites and rules… which divert attention from all that is useful, enslave the people to prejudices, take by their multiplication an enormous amount of time, and deprive the Jews of 'the advantage of being good citizens'." He noted that "the rabbis, pursuing only their interest, have enclosed life in an intertwining of rules", have concentrated in their hands all the police, legal, and spiritual authority; "more precisely, the study of the Talmud and the observance of rites as a unique means of distinguishing oneself and acquiring affluence have become 'the first dream and aspiration of the Jews'"; And although the governmental Regulation "limits the prerogatives of the rabbis and *Kelahim*, "the spirit of the people remained the same." The author of this note considered "the rabbis and the *Kahal* as the main culprits of the ignorance and misery of the people."[76]

Another Jewish public man, Guiller Markevich, a native of Prussia, wrote that the members of the Vilnius *Kahal*, with the help of the local administration, exerted a severe repression against all those who denounced their illegal acts; now deprived of the right to the *Herem*, they kept their accusers for long years in prison, and if one of them succeeded in getting a message from his cell to the higher authorities, "they sent him without any other form of trials to the next world." When this kind of crime was revealed, "the *Kahal* spent large sums to stifle the affair."[77] Other Jewish historians give examples of assassinations directly commissioned by the Jewish *Kahal*.

In their opposition to governmental measures, the *Kehalim* relied essentially on the religious sense of their action; thus "the union of the *Kahal* and the rabbis, desirous of maintaining their power over the masses, made the government believe that every act of a Jew was subject to such and such a religious prescription; the role of religion was thereby increased. As a result, the people of the administration saw in the Jews not members of different social groups, but a single entity closely knit together; the vices and infractions of the Jews were explained not by individual motives, but by 'the alleged land amorality of the Jewish religion'."[78]

"The union of *Kehalim* and rabbis did not want to see or hear anything. It extended its leaden cover over the masses. The power of the *Kahal* only increased while the rights of the elders and rabbis were limited by the Regulation of 1804. "This loss is offset by the fact that the *Kahal* acquired—it is true, only in a certain measure—the role of a representative administration which it had enjoyed in Poland. The *Kahal* owed this strengthening of its authority to the institution of deputies." This deputation of the Jewish communities established in the western provinces, in charge of debating at leisure with the government the problems of Jewish life, was elected in 1807 and sat intermittently for eighteen years. These deputies endeavoured, above all, to restore to the rabbis the right to the *Herem*; They declared that to deprive the rabbis of the right to chastise the disobedient is contrary to the religious respect which the Jews are obliged by law to have for the rabbis." These deputies succeeded in persuading the members of the Committee (of Senator Popov, 1809) that the authority of the rabbis was a support for the Russian governmental power. "The members of the Committee did not resist in front of the threat that the Jews would escape the authority of the rabbis to delve into depravity"; the Committee was "prepared to maintain in its integrity all this archaic structure to avoid the terrible consequences evoked by the deputies… Its members did not seek to know who the deputies considered to be 'violators of the spiritual law'; they did not suspect that they were those who aspired to education"; the deputies "exerted all their efforts to strengthen the authority of the *Kahal* and to dry at the source the movement towards culture."[79] They succeeded in deferring the limitations previously taken to the wearing of traditional Jewish garb, which dated back to the Middle Ages and so blatantly separated the Jews from the surrounding world. Even in Riga, "the law that ordered the Jews to wear another garment was not applied anywhere", and it was reported by the Emperor himself—while awaiting new legislation[80]…

All requests of the deputies were not satisfied, far from it. They needed money and "to get it, the deputies frightened their communities by ominously announcing the intentions of the government and by amplifying the rumours of the capital." In 1820, Markevitch accused the deputies "of intentionally spreading false news… to force the population to pay to the *Kahal* the sums demanded."[81]

In 1825, the institution of the Jewish deputies was suppressed.

One of the sources of tension between the authorities and *Kehalim* resided in the fact that the latter, the only ones authorised to levy the capitation on the Jewish population, "hid the 'souls' during the censuses" and concealed a large quantity of them. "The government thought that it knew the exact numbers of the Jewish population in order to demand the corresponding amount of the capitation," but it was very difficult to establish it.[82] For example, in Berdichev, "the unrecorded Jewish population… regularly accounted for nearly half the actual number of Jewish inhabitants."[83] (According to the official data that the Government had succeeded in establishing for 1818, the Jews were 677,000, an already important number, for example, by comparison with the data of 1812, the number of male individuals had suddenly doubled…—but it was still an undervalued figure, for there were about 40,000 Jews from the kingdom of Poland to add.) Even with reduced figures of the *Kehalim*, there were unrecovered taxes every year; and not only were they not recuperated but they augmented from year to year. Alexander I personally told the Jewish representatives of his discontent at seeing so many concealments and arrears (not to mention the smuggling industry). In 1817 the remission of all fines and surcharges, penalties, and arrears was decreed, and a pardon was granted to all those who had been punished for not correctly recording 'souls', but on the condition that the *Kehalim* provide honest data from then on."[84] But "no improvement ensued. In 1820, the Minister of Finance announced that all measures aimed at improving the economic situation of the Jews were unsuccessful… Many Jews were wandering without identity papers; a new census reported a number of souls two to three times greater (if not more) than those previously provided by Jewish societies."[85]

However, the Jewish population was constantly increasing. Most researchers see one of the main reasons for this growth as being the custom of early marriages prevalent at that time among the Jews: as early as 13 years old for boys, and from 12 years old onwards for girls. In the anonymous note of 1808 quoted above, the unknown Jewish author writes that this custom of early unions "is at the root of innumerable evils" and prevents the Jews from getting rid "of inveterate customs and activities that draw upon them the general public's indignation, and harms them as well as others." Tradition among the Jews is that "those who are not married at a young age are held in contempt and even the most destitute draw on their last resources to marry their children as soon as possible, even though these newlyweds

incur the vicissitudes of a miserable existence. Early marriages were introduced by the rabbis who took advantage of them. And one will be better able to contract a profitable marriage by devoting himself to the study of the Talmud and the strict observance of the rites. Those who married early were indeed only occupied with studying the Talmud, and when finally came the time to lead an autonomous existence, these fathers, ill-prepared for labour, ignorant of the working life, turn to the manufacture of alcohol and petty trading." The same goes for crafts: "By marrying, the fifteen-year-old apprentice no longer learns his trade, but becomes his own boss and only ruins the work."[86] In the mid-1920s, "in the provinces of Grodno and Vilnius, there was a rumour that it would be forbidden to enter into marriage before reaching the age of majority", which is why "there was a hasty conclusion of marriages between children who were little more than 9 years old."[87]

These early marriages debilitated the life of the Jews. How could such a swarming, such a densification of the population, such competition in similar occupations, lead to any thing else than misery? The policy of the *Kehalim* contributed to "the worsening of the material conditions of the Jews."[88]

Menashe Ilier, a distinguished Talmudist but also a supporter of the rationalism of the age of Enlightenment, published in 1807 a book, which he sent to the rabbis (it was quickly withdrawn from circulation by the rabbinate, and his second book was to be destined to a massive book burning). He addressed "the dark aspects of Jewish life." He stated: "Misery is inhumanly great, but can it be otherwise when the Jews have more mouths to feed than hands to work? It is important to make the masses understand that it is necessary to earn a living by the sweat of their brow… Young people, who have no income, contract marriage by counting on the mercy of God and on the purse of their father, and when this support is lacking, laden with family, they throw themselves on the first occupation come, even if it is dishonest. In droves they devote themselves to commerce, but as the latter cannot feed them all, they are obliged to resort to deceit. This is why it is desirable that the Jews turn to agriculture. An army of idlers, under the appearance of 'educated people', live by charity and at the expense of the community. No one cures the people: the rich only think of enriching themselves, the rabbis think only of the disputes between *Hassidim* and *Minagdes* (Jewish Orthodox), and the only concern of the Jewish activists is to short-circuit 'the misfortune presented in the form of governmental decrees, even if they contribute to the good of the people'."[89]

Thus "the great majority of the Jews in Russia lived on small trade, crafts, and small industries, or served as intermediaries"; "they have inundated the cities of factories and retail shops."[90] How could the economic life of the Jewish people be healthy under these conditions?

However, a much later Jewish author of the mid-twentieth century was able to write, recalling this time: "It is true that the Jewish mass lived cheaply and poorly. But the Jewish community as a whole was not miserable."[91]

There is no lack of interest in the rather unexpected testimonies of the life of the Jews in the western provinces, seen by the participants in the Napoleonic expedition of 1812 who passed through this region. On the outskirts of Dochitsa, the Jews "are rich and wealthy, they trade intensively with Russian Poland and even go to the Leipzig fair." At Gloubokie, "the Jews had the right to distil alcohol and make vodka and mead," they "established or owned cabarets, inns, and relays located on highways." The Jews of Mogilev are well-off, undertake large-scale trading (although "a terrible misery reigns around that area"). "Almost all the Jews in those places had a license to sell spirits. Financial transactions were largely developed there." Here again is the testimony of an impartial observer: "In Kiev, the Jews are no longer counted. The general characteristic of Jewish life is ease, although it is not the lot of all."[92]

On the level of psychology and everyday life, the Russian Jews have the following 'specific traits': "a constant concern about… their fate, their identity… how to fight, defend themselves…" "*cohesion* stems from established customs: the existence of an authoritarian and powerful social structure charged with preserving… the uniqueness of the way of life"; "adaptation to new conditions is to a very large extent collective" and not individual.[93]

We must do justice to this organic unity of land, which in the first half of the nineteenth century "gave the Jewish people of Russia its original aspect. This world was compact, organic, subject to vexations, not spared of suffering and deprivation, but it was a world in itself. Man was not stifled within it. In this world, one could experience *joie de vivre*, one could find one's food… one could build one's life to one's taste and in one's own way, both materially and

spiritually… Central fact: the spiritual dimension of the community was linked to traditional knowledge and the Hebrew language."[94]

But in the same book devoted to the Russian Jewish world, another writer notes that "the lack of rights, material misery, and social humiliation hardly allowed self-respect to develop among the people."[95]

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The picture we have presented of these years is complex, as is almost any problem related to the Jewish world. Henceforth, throughout our development, we must not lose sight of this complexity, but must constantly bear it in mind, without being disturbed by the apparent contradictions between various authors.

"Long ago, before being expelled from Spain, the Jews [of Eastern Europe] marched at the head of other nations; today [in the first half of the seventeenth century], their cultural impoverishment is total. Deprived of rights, cut off from the surrounding world, they retreated into themselves. The Renaissance passed by without concern for them, as did the intellectual movement of the eighteenth century in Europe. But this Jewish world was strong in itself. Hindered by countless religious commandments and prohibitions, the Jew not only did not suffer from them, but rather saw in them the source of infinite joys. In them, the intellect found satisfaction in the subtle dialectic of the Talmud, the feeling in the mysticism of the Kabbalah. Even the study of the Bible was sidelined, and knowledge of grammar was considered almost a crime."[96]

The strong attraction of the Jews to the Enlightenment began in Prussia during the second half of the eighteenth century and received the name of *Haskala* (Age of Enlightenment). This intellectual awakening translated their desire to initiate themselves in European culture, to enhance the prestige of Judaism, which had been humiliated by other peoples. In parallel with the critical study of the Jewish past, *Haskala* militants (the *Maskilim*; the "enlightened", "educated") wanted to harmoniously unite Jewish culture with European knowledge.[97] At first, "they intended to remain faithful to traditional Judaism, but in their tracks they began to sacrifice the Jewish tradition and take the side of assimilation by showing increasing contempt… for the language of their people"[98] (Yiddish, that is). In Prussia this movement lasted the time of a generation, but it quickly reached the Slavic provinces of the empire, Bohemia, and Galicia. In Galicia, supporters of *Haskala*, who were even more inclined to assimilation, were already ready to introduce the Enlightenment by force, and even "often enough had recourse to it"[99] with the help of authorities. The border between Galicia and the western provinces of Russia was permeable to individuals as well as to influences. With a delay of a century, the movement eventually penetrated into Russia.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century in Russia, the government "endeavoured precisely to overcome Jewish 'particularism' outside of religion and worship", as a Jewish author euphemistically specifies[100], confirming that this government did not interfere with the religion or religious life of the Jews. We have already seen that the Regulation of 1804 opened the doors of primary schools, secondary schools, and universities to all Jewish children, without any limitations or reservations. However,—"the aim of all the efforts of the Jewish ruling class was to nip in the bud this educational and cultural reform"[101]; "The *Kahal* endeavoured to extinguish the slightest light of the Enlightenment."[102] To "preserve in its integrity the established religious and social order… the rabbinate and Hasidism were endeavouring to eradicate the seedlings of secular education."[103]

Thus, "the great masses of the Pale of Settlement felt horror and suspicion for Russian schooling and did not want to hear about it."[104] In 1817, and again in 1821, in various provinces, there were cases where the *Kehalim* prevented Jewish children from learning the Russian language in any school, whichever it was. The Jewish deputies in St. Petersburg repeated insistently that "they did not consider it necessary to open Jewish schools" where languages other than Hebrew would be taught.[105] They recognised only the *Heder* (elementary school of Jewish language) and the *Yeshiva* (graduate school intended to deepen the knowledge of the Talmud); "almost every important community" had its *Yeshiva*.[106]

The Jewish body in Russia was thus hindered and could not free itself on its own.

But the first cultural protagonists also emerged from it, unable to move things without the help of Russian authorities. In the first place Isaac-Ber Levinson, a scholar who had lived in Galicia, where he had been in contact with the militants of *Haskala*, regarded not only the rabbinate but also the *Hasidim* as responsible for many popular misfortunes. Basing himself on the Talmud itself and on rabbinical literature, he demonstrated in his book *Instructions to Israel* that Jews were not forbidden to know foreign languages, especially not the official language of the country where they lived, if necessary in private as well as in public life; that knowledge of the secular sciences does not pose a threat to national and religious sentiment; finally, that the predominance of commercial occupations is in contradiction with the Torah as with reason, and that it is important to develop productive work. But to publish his book, Levinson had to use a subsidy from the Ministry of Education; he himself was convinced that cultural reform within Judaism could only be achieved with the support of the higher authorities.[107]

Later, it was Guesanovsky, a teacher in Warsaw, who, in a note to the authorities, without relying on the Talmud, but on the contrary, by opposing it, imputed to the *Kahal* and the rabbinate "the spiritual stagnation which had petrified the people"; he stated that solely the weakening of their power would make it possible to introduce secular schooling; that it was necessary to control the *Melamed* (primary school teachers) and to admit as teachers only those deemed pedagogically and morally suitable; that the *Kahal* had to be dismissed from the financial administration; and that the age of nuptial contracts had to be raised. Long before them, in his note to the Minister of Finance, Guiller Markevitch, already quoted, wrote that in order to save the Jewish people from spiritual and economic decline, it was necessary to abolish the *Kehalim*, to teach the Jews languages, to organise work for them in factories, but also to allow them to freely engage in commerce throughout the country and use the services of Christians.

Later, in the 1930s, Litman Feiguine, a Chernigov merchant and a major supplier, took up most of these arguments with even greater insistence, and through Benkendorff [*] his note ended up in the hands of Nicolas I (Feiguine benefited from the support of bureaucratic circles). He defended the Talmud but reproached the *Melamed* for being "the lowest of the incompetents"… who taught a theology "founded on fanaticism", inculcated in children "the contempt of other disciplines as well as the hatred of the Heterodox." He also considered it essential to suppress the *Kehalim*. (Hessen, the sworn enemy of the *Kahal* system, affirms that the latter, "by its despotism", aroused among the Jews "an obscure resentment.")[108]

Long, very long, was the path that enabled secular education to penetrate into Jewish circles. Meanwhile, the only exceptions were in Vilnius, where, under the influence of relations with Germany, the *Maksilim* intellectual group had gained strength, and in Odessa, the new capital of New Russia, home to many Jews from Galicia (due to the permeability of frontiers), populated by various nationalities and in the throes of intense commercial activity,—hence the *Kahal* did not feel itself powerful there. The intelligentsia, on the contrary, had the feeling of its independence and blended culturally (by the way of dressing, by all external aspects) in the surrounding population.[109] Even though "the majority of the Odessite Jews were opposed to the establishment of a general educational establishment"[110] principally due to the efforts of the local administration, in the 30s, in Odessa as in Kishinev were created secular schools of the private type which were successful."[111]

Then, in the course of the nineteenth century, this breakthrough of the Russian Jews towards education irresistibly intensified and would have historical consequences for Russia as for all mankind during the twentieth century. Thanks to a great effort of will, Russian Judaism managed to free itself from the state of threatening stagnation in which it found itself and to fully accede to a rich and diversified life. By the middle of the nineteenth century, there was a clear discernment of the signs of a revival and development in Russian Judaism, a movement of high historical significance, which no one had yet foreseen.

Footnotes

1. *Hessen*, Istoria evreïskogo naroda v Rossii (History of the Jewish People in Russia), in 2 volumes, t. 1, Leningrad, 1925, p. 149.
2. *M. Kovalevsky*, Ravnopravie evreev i ego vragi (The Equality of the Rights of Jews and their Adversaries), in Schit, literary collection rd

edited by L. Andréev, M. Gorky and F. Sologoub, 3 edition completed, Russian Society for the Study of the lives of Jews, Moscow, 1916, p. 117.

- Double tax instituted for the Jews by Catherine (to whom the “old believers” had long been subjected), but which was hardly applied.

3. *Hessen*, t. 1, pp. 148-158; JE, t. 1, pp. 799-800.
4. JE, t. 13, pp. 158-159.
5. *Hessen*, t. 1, p. 158-159.
6. JE, t. 3, p. 79.
7. *Hessen*, t. 1, p. 128.
8. *V. N. Nikitin*, Evrei i zemledeltsy: Istoritcheskoe. zakonodatelnoe. administra-tivnoc i bylovoc polojenie kolonii so vremeni ikh vozniknivenia do nachikh dneï (The Jews in Agriculture: Historical, legal, administrative, practice of the colonies from their origin to the present day), 1807-1887, Saint Petersburg, 1887, pp. 6-7.
9. *Prince N. N. Golitsyn*, Istoria rousskogo zakonodatelstva o evreiakh (History of Russian Legislation for the Jews), Saint Petersburg, t. 1, 1649-1825, p. 430.
10. *Ibidem*, t. 1, pp. 439-440.
11. *Ibidem*.
12. JE, t. 3. p. 79.
13. *G. R. Derzhavin*, works in 9 vol., 2nd ed., Saint Petersburg, 1864-1883, t. 6, 1876, pp. 761-762.
14. *Hessen*, t. 1, pp. 163-165.
15. JE, t. 1. p. 801.
16. *Ibidem*.
17. *Hessen*, 1.1, p. 163-167.
18. JE, t. 5, p. 859.
19. *S. Pozner*, Evrei Litvy i Beloroussii 125 let lomou nazad (The Jews of Lithuania and Belarus 125 Years Ago), in M.J., Directory, 1939, pp. 60, 65-66.
20. PJE, t. 7. pp. 309-311.
21. *Cf.* Rousskaïa Volia (The Russian Will), Petrograd, 1917, 22 April, p. 3.
22. *Hessen*, t. 1, pp. 222-223.
23. JE*, t. 3, pp. 80-81.
24. *Ibidem*, t. 5, pp. 609, 621.
25. *Ibidem*, p. 612.
26. JE, t. 11, p. 492.
27. *V. V. Choulguine*, Tchto nam v nikh ne nravitsia…: Ob antisemitism v Rossii (What we do not like about them: Anti-Semitism in Russia). Paris, 1929, p. 129.
28. JE*, t. 3, p. 81.
29. *Ibidem**.
30. *Ibidem**, p. 82; cf. equally *Hessen*, t. 1. pp. 185, 187.
31. *P. I. Pestel*, Rousskaïa pravda (Russian Truth), Saint Petersburg, 1906, chap. 2, § 14, pp. 50-52.
32. *Ibidem**, t. 11, p. 493.
33. *Ibidem**, 1.1, p. 804.
34. *Ibidem**, 1.11, p. 493.
35. *Ibidem**, t. 1, p. 804.
36. *Ibidem*, t. 11, p. 493.
37. *Hessen**. t. 1, pp. 206-207.
38. JE, t. 11, p. 493.

- Sabbatarians: sect whose existence is attested from the late seventeenth century, which was characterised by pronounced Judaising tendencies.

39. PJE, t. 7, p. 313; Kovalevski, in Schit [The Butcher], p. 17.
40. JE, 1.1, p. 805.
41. JE, t. 12, p. 599.
42. *Nikitin*, pp. 6-7.
43. *Ibidem*, pp. 7, 58, 154.
44. *I. Orchansky*, Evrei v Rossii (Jews in Russia), Essays and Studies, fasc. 1, Saint Petersburg, 1872, pp. 174-175.

45. *Nikitin*, pp. 3, 128.
46. *Ibidem**, pp. 7, 13, 16, 19, 58.
47. *Ibidem**, pp. 14, 15, 17, 19, 24, 50.
48. *Ibidem*, pp. 26, 28, 41, 43-44, 47, 50, 52, 62-63, 142.
49. *Ibidem**, p. 72.
50. *Ibidem*, pp. 24, 37-40, 47-50, 61, 65, 72-73, 93.
51. *Ibidem*, pp. 29, 37-38.
52. *Ibidem*, pp. 29, 49, 67, 73, 89, 189.
53. *Ibidem**, pp. 87-88.
54. *Ibidem**, pp. 64, 78-81, 85, 92-97, 112, 116-117, 142-145.
55. *Ibidem*, pp. 79, 92, 131, 142, 146-149.
56. *Ibidem**, pp. 36, 106, 145.
57. *Ibidem*, pp. 13, 95, 109, 144, 505.
58. *Ibidem*, pp. 99-102, 105, 146.
59. *Ibidem*, pp. 103-109.
60. *Ibidem**, pp. 103-104.
61. *Orchansky*, pp. 170, 173-174.
62. *Nikitin*, p. 114.
63. *Ibidem**, p. 135.
64. *Ibidem*, p. 118.
65. *Ibidem**, pp. 110, 120-129, 132, 144, 471.
66. *Ibidem*, pp. 138, 156.
67. *Hessen*, 1.1. pp. 205-206.
68. *Ibidem*, pp. 176-181; JE, t. 7, pp. 103-104.
69. *Hessen*, 1.1, pp. 180, 192-194.
70. PJE, t. 4, pp. 582-586; Hessen, 1.1, p 183.
71. *Hessen**, t. 1, pp. 211-212.
72. *Pestel*, pp. 52-53.
73. *Hessen**, t. 2, p. 18.
74. *Hessen*, I. 1. pp. 169-170.
75. *Ibidem*, p. 51; JE, t. 14, p. 491.
76. *Hessen*, t. 1, pp. 171-173.
77. *Hessen**, t. 2, pp. 11-13.
78. *Ibidem*, t. 1, p. 195.
79. *Ibidem*, pp. 173-175.
80. *Ibidem**, pp. 191-192.
81. *Ibidem*, p. 209.
82. *Ibidem*, p. 178.
83. *Orchansky*, p. 32.
84. *Hessen*, t. 1, pp. 178-179, 184, 186.
85. *Ibidem*, I. 2, pp. 62-63.
86. *Ibidem**, t. 1, pp. 171-172.
87. *Ibidem*, t. 2, p. 56.
88. *Ibidem*, t. 1, p. 210.
89. *Ibidem*, pp. 170–171; JE, t. 10, pp. 855-857.
90. *Hessen*, t. 1, pp. 190, 208.
91. *B. C. Dinour*, Religiozno-natsionalnyj oblik rousskoo cvreïstva (The Religious and National Physionomy of Russian Jews), in BJWR-1, p. 318.
92. *Pozner*, in JW-1, pp. 61, 63-64.
93. *Dinour*, BJWR-1, pp. 61, 63-64.
94. *Ibidem*, p. 318.
95. *J. Mark*, Literatoura na idich v Rossii (Yiddish Language Literature in Russia), in BJWR-1, p. 520.
96. JE, t. 6, p. 92.
97. *Ibidem*, pp. 191-192.
98. *J. Kissine*, Rasmychlenia o ousskom evreïstve i ego lileraloure (Thoughts on Russian Judaism and its literature), in Evreïskii mir. 2, New York, ed. Of the Jewish Russian Union, 1944, p. 171.
99. JE, t. 6, pp. 192-193.

100. *Dinour*, LVJR-1, p. 314.
101. *Hessen*, p. 160.
102. *Ibidem*, p. 160.
103. *Ibidem*, t. 2, p. 1.
104. *M. Troitsky*, Evrei v rousskoï chkole (The Jews in Russian Schools), in LVJR-1, p. 350.
105. *Hessen**, t. 1, pp. 188-189.
106. *Dinour*, LVJR-1, p. 315.
107. *Hessen*, t. 2, pp. 4-7.

- Count Alexander Benkendorff (1783-1844), named in 1814 by Nicholas I Commander of the gendarmes and of the 3rd Section (the intelligence service).

108. *Hessen*, t. 2, pp. 8-10; JE, 1.15, p. 198.
109. *Hessen*, t. 2, pp. 2-3.
110. JE, t. 11, p. 713.
111. *Troitsky*, in BJWR-1, p. 351.

Chapter 3

During the Reign of Nicholas 1

With regard to the Jews, Nicholas I was very resolute. It was during his reign, according to sources, that more than half of all legal acts relating to Jews, from Alexis Mikhailovich to the death of Alexander II[*], were published, and the Emperor personally examined this legislative work to direct it.[1]

Jewish historiography has judged that his policy was exceptionally cruel and gloomy. However, the personal interventions of Nicholas I did not necessarily prejudice the Jews, far from it. For example, one of the first files he received as an inheritance from Alexander I was the reopening, on the eve of his death (while on his way to Taganrog), of the "Velije affair"—the accusation against the Jews for having perpetrated a ritual murder on the person of a child. *The Jewish Encyclopedia* writes that "to a large extent, the Jews are indebted to the verdict of acquittal to the Emperor who sought to know the truth despite the obstruction on the part of the people he trusted." In another well-known case, linked to accusations against the Jews (the "assassination of Mstislavl"), the Emperor willingly turned to the truth: after having, in a moment of anger, inflicted sanctions against the local Jewish population, he did not refuse to acknowledge his error.[2] By signing the verdict of acquittal in the Velije case, Nicolas wrote that "the vagueness of the requisitions had not made it possible to take another decision", adding nevertheless: "I do not have the moral certainty that Jews could have committed such a crime, or that they could not have done it." "Repeated examples of this kind of assassination, with the same clues," but always without sufficient evidence, suggest to him that there might be a fanatical sect among the Jews, but "unfortunately, even among us Christians, there also exists sects just as terrifying and incomprehensible."[3] "Nicholas I and his close collaborators continued to believe that certain Jewish groups practised ritual murders."[4] For several years, the Emperor was under the severe grip of a calumny that smelled of blood… therefore his prejudice that Jewish religious doctrine was supposed to present a danger to the Christian population was reinforced."[5]

This danger was understood by Nicolas in the fact that the Jews could convert Christians to Judaism. Since the eighteenth century, the high profile conversion to the Judaism of Voznitsyn, a captain of the Imperial army, had been kept in mind. "In Russia, from the second half of the seventeenth century onwards, groups of 'Judaisers' multiplied. In 1823, the Minister of Internal Affairs announced in a report "the wide-spread of the heresy of 'Judaisers' in Russia, and estimated the number of its followers at 20,000 people." Persecutions began, after which "many members of the sect pretended to return to the bosom of the Orthodox Church while continuing to observe in secret the rites of their sect."[6]

"A consequence of all this was that the legislation on the Jews took, at the time of Nicholas I… a religious spin."[7] The decisions and actions of Nicholas I with regard to the Jews were affected, such as his insistence on prohibiting them from having recourse to Christian servants, especially Christian nurses, for "work among the Jews undermines and weakens the Christian faith in women." In fact, notwithstanding repeated prohibitions, this provision "never was fully applied… and Christians continued to serve" amongst the Jews.[8]

The first measure against the Jews, which Nicolas considered from the very beginning of his reign, was to put them on an equal footing with the Russian population with regard to the subjugation to compulsory service to the State, and in particular, requiring them to participate physically in conscription, which they had not been subjected to since their attachment to Russia. The *bourgeois* Jews did not supply recruits, but acquitted 500 rubles per head.[9] This measure was not dictated solely by governmental considerations to standardise the obligations of the population (the Jewish communities were in any case very slow to pay the royalties, and moreover, Russia received many Jews from Galicia where they were already required to perform military service); nor by the fact that the obligation to provide recruits "would reduce the number of Jews not engaged in productive work"—rather, the idea was that the Jewish recruit, isolated from his closed environment, would be better placed to join the lifestyle of the nation as a whole, and perhaps even orthodoxy.[10] Taken into account, these considerations considerably tightened the conditions of the conscription

applied to the Jews, leading to a gradual increase in the number of recruits and the lowering of the age of the conscripts.

It cannot be said that Nicolas succeeded in enforcing the decree on the military service of the Jews without encountering resistance. On the contrary, all instances of execution proceeded slowly. The Council of Ministers discussed at length whether it was ethically defensible to take such a measure "in order to limit Jewish overcrowding"; as stated by Minister of Finance Georg von Cancrin, "all recognise that it is inappropriate to collect humans rather than money." The *Kehalim* did not spare their efforts to remove this threat from the Jews or to postpone it. When, exasperated by such slow progress, Nicholas ordered a final report to be presented to him in the shortest delays, "this order, it seems, only incited the *Kehalim* to intensify their action behind the scenes to delay the advancement of the matter. And they apparently succeeded in winning over to their cause one of the high officials," whereby "the report never reached its destination"! At the very top of the Imperial apparatus, "this mysterious episode," concludes J. Hessen, "could not have occurred without the participation of the *Kahal*." A subsequent retrieval of the report was also unfulfilled, and Nicolas, without waiting any longer, introduced the conscription for the Jews by decree in 1827[11] (then, in 1836, equality in obtaining medals for the Jewish soldiers who had distinguished themselves[12]).

Totally exempted from recruitment were "the merchants of all guilds, inhabitants of the agricultural colonies, workshop leaders, mechanics in factories, rabbis and all Jews having a secondary or higher education."[13] Hence the desire of many Jewish *bourgeois* to try to make it into the class of merchants, *bourgeois* society railing to see its members required to be drafted for military service, "undermining the forces of the community, be it under the effect of taxation or recruitment." The merchants, on the other hand, sought to reduce their visible "exposure" to leave the payment of taxes to the *bourgeois*. Relations between Jewish merchants and *bourgeois* were strained, for "at that time, the Jewish merchants, who had become more numerous and wealthier, had established strong relations in governmental spheres." The *Kahal* of Grodno appealed to Saint Petersburg to demand that the Jewish population be divided into four "classes"—merchants, *bourgeois*, artisans, and cultivators—and that each should not have to answer for the others[14]. (In this idea proposed in the early 30s by the *Kehalim* themselves, one can see the first step towards the future "categorisation" carried out by Nicolas in 1840, which was so badly received by the Jews.)

The *Kehalim* were also charged with the task of recruiting among the Jewish mass, of which the government had neither recorded numbers nor profiles. The *Kahal* "put all the weight of this levy on the backs of the poor", for "it seemed preferable for the most deprived to leave the community, whereas a reduction in the number of its wealthy members could lead to general ruin." The *Kehalim* asked the provincial authorities (but they were denied) the right to disregard the turnover "in order to be able to deliver to recruitment the 'tramps', those who did not pay taxes, the insufferable troublemakers", so that "the owners… who assume all the obligations of society should not have to provide recruits belonging to their families"; and in this way the *Kehalim* were given the opportunity to act against certain members of the community.[15]

However, with the introduction of military service among the Jews, the men who were subject to it began to shirk and the full count was never reached. The cash taxation on Jewish communities had been considerably diminished, but it was noticed that this did by no means prevent it from continuing to be refunded only very partially. Thus, in 1829, Nicholas I granted Grodno's request that in certain provinces Jewish recruits should be levied in addition to the tariff imposed in order to cover tax arrears. "In 1830 a Senate decree stipulated that the appeal of an additional recruit reduced the sums owed by the *Kahal* of 1,000 rubles in the case of an adult, 500 rubles in the case of a minor."[16] It is true that following the untimely zeal of the governors this measure was soon reported, while "Jewish communities themselves asked the government to enlist recruits to cover their arrears." In government circles "this proposal was welcomed coldly, for it was easy to foresee that it would open new possibilities of abuse for the *Kehalim*."[17] However, as we can see, the idea matured on one side as well as on the other. Evoking these increased stringencies in the recruitment of Jews by comparison with the rest of the population, Hessen writes that this was a "glaring anomaly" in Russian law, for in general, in Russia, "the legislation applicable to the Jews did not tend to impose more obligations than that of other citizens."[18]

Nicholas I's keen intelligence, inclined to draw clearly legible perspectives (legend has it that the Saint Petersburg – Moscow railway was, as a result, mapped out with a ruler!), in his tenacious determination to transform the

particularist Jews into ordinary Russian subjects, and, if possible, into Orthodox Christians, went from the idea of military recruitment to that of Jewish cantonists. The cantonists (the name goes back to 1805) was an institution sheltering the children of the soldiers (lightening in favour of the fathers the burden of a service which lasted… twenty-five years!); it was supposed to extend the "sections for military orphans" created under Peter the Great, a kind of school for the government which provided the students with technical knowledge useful for their subsequent service in the army (which, in the eyes of civil servants, now seems quite appropriate for young Jewish children, or even highly desirable to keep them from a young age and for long years cut off from their environment. In preparation to the cantonist institution, an 1827 decree granted "Jewish communities the right to recruit a minor instead of an adult", from the age of 12 (that is, before the age of nuptiality among the Jews). The *New Jewish Encyclopedia* believes that this measure was "a very hard blow." But this faculty in no way meant the obligation to call a soldier at the age of 12[19], it had nothing to do with "the introduction of compulsory conscription for Jewish children,"[20] as wrote erroneously the Encyclopedia, and as it ended up being accredited in the literature devoted to the Jews of Russia, then in the collective memory. The *Kehalim* even found this a profitable substitution and used it by recruiting "the orphans, the children of widows (sometimes bypassing the law protecting only children)", often "for the benefit of the progeny of a rich man."[21] Then, from the age of 18, the cantonists performed the usual military service, so long at the time—but let us not forget that it was not limited to barracks life; the soldiers married, lived with their families, learned to practice other trades; they received the right to establish themselves in the interior provinces of the empire, where they completed their service. But, unquestionably, the Jewish soldiers who remained faithful to the Jewish religion and its ritual suffered from being unable to observe the Sabbath or contravene the rules on food.

Minors placed with cantonists, separated from their family environment, naturally found it difficult to resist the pressure of their educators (who were encouraged by rewards to successfully convert their pupils) during lessons of Russian, arithmetic, but above all, of catechism; they were also rewarded for their conversion, moreover, it was facilitated by their resentment towards a community that had given them up to recruitment. But, conversely, the tenacity of the Jewish character, the faithfulness to the religion inculcated at an early age, made many of them hold their grounds. Needless to say, these methods of conversion to Christianity were not Christian and did not achieve their purpose. On the other hand, the accounts of conversions obtained by cruelty, or by death threats against the cantonists, supposedly collective drownings in the rivers for those who refused baptism (such stories received public attention in the decades that followed), fall within the domain of pure fiction. As the *Jewish Encyclopedia* published before the Revolution the "popular legend" of the few hundred cantonists allegedly killed by drowning was born from the information published in a German newspaper, according to which "eight hundred cantonists were taken away one fine day to be baptised in the water of a river, two of them perished by drowning…"[22]

The statistical data from the Military Inspection Archives to the General Staff[23] for the years 1847–1854, when the recruitment of Jewish cantonists was particularly high, showed that they represented on average only 2.4% of the many cantonists in Russia, in other words, that their proportion did not exceed that of the Jewish population in the country, even taking into account the undervalued data provided by the *Kehalim* during the censuses.

Doubtlessly the baptised had an interest in exculpating themselves from their compatriots in exaggerating the degree of coercion they had to undergo in their conversion to Christianity, especially since as part of this conversion they enjoyed certain advantages in the accomplishment of their service. Moreover, "many converted cantonists remained secretly faithful to their original religion, and some of them later returned to Judaism."[24]

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In the last years of the reign of Alexander I, after a new wave of famine in Belarus (1822), a new senator had been sent on mission: he had come back with the same conclusions as Derzhavin a quarter of a century before. The "Jewish Committee" established in 1823, composed of four ministers, had proposed to study "on what grounds it would be expedient and profitable to organise the participation of the Jews in the State" and to "put down in writing all that could contribute to the improvement of the civil situation of this people." They soon realised that the problem thus posed was beyond their strength, and in 1825 this "Jewish Committee" at the ministerial level had been replaced by a "Directors

Committee" (the fifth), composed of the directors of their ministries, who devoted themselves to studying the problem for another eight years.[25]

In his eagerness, Nicholas preceded the work of this committee with his decisions. Thus, as we have seen, he introduced conscription for the Jews. This is how he set a deadline of three years to expel the Jews from all the villages of the western provinces and put an end to their activity of alcohol manufacturing, but, as under his predecessors, this measure experienced slowdowns, stoppages, and was ultimately reported. Subsequently, he prohibited Jews from holding taverns and diners, from living in such places, and ensuring the retail sale of alcohol in person, but this measure was not applied either.[26]

Another attempt was made to deny the Jews one of their favourite jobs: the maintenance of post houses (with their inns and taverns), but again in vain because, apart from the Jews, there was not enough candidates to occupy them.[27]

In 1827, a leasing system of the distilling activities was introduced throughout the empire, but there was a considerable fall in the prices obtained at the auctions when the Jews were discarded and "it happened that there was no other candidate to take these operations," so that they had to be allowed to the Jews, whether in the towns or in the countryside, even beyond the area of residence. The government was, in fact, relieving the Jews of the responsibility of organising the collection of taxes on liquor and thus receiving a regular return.[28] "Long before the merchants of the first guild were allowed to reside in any part of the empire, all farmers enjoyed the freedom to move and resided in capitals and other cities outside the Pale of Settlement… From the midst of the farmers came prominent Jewish public men" like Litman Feiguine, already mentioned, and Evsel Günzburg ("he had held an alcohol manufacturing tenancy in a besieged Sevastopol"); "In 1859 he founded in Saint Petersburg a banking establishment… one of the most important in Russia"; later, "he participated in the placement of Russian Treasury bonds in Europe"; he was the founder of the dynasty of the Günzburg barons[29]). Beginning in 1848, all "Jewish merchants of the first guild were allowed to lease drinking places even where Jews had no right to reside permanently."[30]

The Jews also received a more extensive right with respect to the distillation of alcohol. As we remember, in 1819, they were allowed to distil it in the provinces of Great Russia "until Russian artisans acquire sufficient competence." In 1826 Nicolas decided to repatriate them to the Pale of Settlement, but in 1827 he conceded to several specific requests to keep distillers in place, for example in the state factories in Irkutsk.[31]

Vladimir Solvoyov quotes the following thoughts from Mr. Katkov: "In the western provinces it is the Jew who deals with alcohol, but is the situation better in the other provinces of Russia? … The Jewish innkeepers who get the people drunk, ruin the peasants and cause their doom, are they present throughout Russia? What is happening elsewhere in Russia, where Jews are not admitted and where the flow of liquor is held by an Orthodox bartender or a kulak?"[32] Let us listen to Leskov, the great connoisseur of Russian popular life: "In the provinces of Greater Russia where Jews do not reside, the number of those accused of drunkenness, or crimes committed under the influence, are regularly and significantly higher than within the Pale of Settlement. The same applies to the number of deaths due to alcoholism… And this is not a new phenomenon: it has been so since ancient times."[33]

However, it is true, statistics tell us that in the western and southern provinces of the empire there was one drinking place per 297 inhabitants, whereas in the eastern provinces there was only one for 585. The newspaper *The Voice*, which was not without influence at the time, was able to say that the trade of alcohol of the Jews was "the wound of this area"—namely the western region—"and an intractable wound" at that. In his theoretical considerations, I.G. Orchansky tries to show that the stronger the density in drinking places, the less alcoholism there was (we must understand that, according to him, the peasant will succumb less to temptation if the flow of drinks is found under his nose and solicits him 24 hours a day—remember Derzhavin: the bartenders trade night and day; but will the peasant be tempted by a distant cabaret, when he will have to cross several muddy fields to reach it? No, we know only too well that alcoholism is sustained not only by demand, but also by the supply of vodka. Orchansky nevertheless pursues his demonstration: when the Jew is interposed between the distiller and the drunken peasant, he acts objectively in favour of the peasant because he sells vodka at a lower price, but it is true that he does so by pawning the effects of the peasant. Certainly, he writes, some believe nevertheless that Jewish tenants have "a poor influence on the condition of the peasants", but it is

because, “in the trade of bartending, as in all the other occupations, they differ by their know-how, skill and dynamism.”[34] It is true that elsewhere, in another essay of the same collection, he recognises the existence of “fraudulent transactions with the peasants”; “it is right to point out that the Jewish trade is grossly deceitful and that the Jewish dealer, tavern-keeper and usurer exploit a miserable population, especially in the countryside”; “faced with an owner, the peasant holds on firmly to his prices, but he is amazingly supple and confident when dealing with a Jew, especially if the latter holds a bottle of vodka in reserve… the peasant is often brought to sell his wheat dirt cheap to the Jew.”[35] Nevertheless, to this crude, glaring, arresting truth, Orchansky seeks attenuating circumstances. But this evil that eats away the will of the peasants, how to justify it?…

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Due to his insistent energy, Nicholas I, throughout his reign, did not only face failures in his efforts to transform Jewish life in its different aspects.

This was the case with Jewish agriculture.

The “Regulation on the obligations of recruitment and military service of the Jews”, dated 1827, stipulated that Jewish farmers “transferred…” on private plots were released, as well as their children, from the obligation to provide recruits for a period of fifty years (exemption incurring from the moment they actually began to “engage in agricultural work”). As soon as this regulation was made public, more Jews returned to the colonies than those who had absented themselves on their own initiative, that had been signalled absent.[36]

In 1829 a more elaborate and detailed regulation concerning Jewish cultivators was published: it envisaged their access to the *bourgeois* class provided that all their debts were paid; authorisation to absent themselves for up to three months to seek a livelihood during periods when the land did not require their physical work; sanctions against those who absent themselves without authorisation, and rewards for distinguished agricultural leaders. V. Nikitin admits: “To compare the severe constraints imposed on Jewish farmers, ‘but with rights and privileges exclusively granted to the Jews’, with those of the other taxable classes, it must be observed that the government treated the Jews with great benevolence.”[37]

And, from 1829 to 1833, “the Jews labour the land with zeal, fate rewards them with good harvests, they are satisfied with the authorities, and vice versa, and general prosperity is tainted only by fortuitous incidents, without great importance.” After the war with Turkey—1829—“the arrears of taxes are entirely handed over to the Jewish residents as to all the settlers… for ‘having suffered from the passage of years’.” But according to the report of the supervisory committee, “the bad harvest of 1833 made it impossible to retain [the Jews] in the colonies, it allowed many who had neither the desire nor the courage to devote themselves to the agricultural work of sowing nothing, or almost nothing, of getting rid of the cattle, going away from here and there, of demanding subsidies and not paying royalties.” In 1834, more than once, they saw “the sale of the grain which they had received, and the slaughter of the cattle”, which was also done by those who were not driven to do so by necessity; The Jews received bad harvests more often than other peasants, for, with the exception of insufficient seedlings, they worked the land haphazardly, at the wrong time, which was due to the “the habit, transmitted from generation to generation, of practising easy trades, of mismanaging, and neglecting the surveillance of livestock.”[38]

One might have thought that three decades of unfortunate experiences in the implementation of Jewish agriculture (compared to universal experience) would suffice for the government to renounce these vain and expensive attempts. But no! Did the reiterative reports not reach Nicholas I? Or were they embellished by the ministers? Or did the inexhaustible energy and irrefragable hope of the sovereign impel him to renew these incessant attempts?

In any case, Jewish agriculture, in the new Jewish Regulation dated 1835 and approved by the Emperor (the result of the work of the “Directors Committee”), is not at all excluded, but on the contrary, enhanced: “to organise the lives of the Jews according to rules which would enable them to earn a decent living by practising agriculture and industry, gradually dispensing instruction to their youth, which would prevent them from engaging in idleness or unlawful

occupations." If the Jewish community were previously required to pay 400 rubles per household, now "every Jew was allowed to become a farmer at any time, all tax arrears were immediately handed over to him, and to his community"; They were given the right to receive land from the state in usufruct without time limit (but within the Pale of Settlement), to acquire plots of land, to sell them, to rent them. Those who became farmers were exempt from taxation for twenty-five years, property tax for ten years, recruitment for fifty years. In reverse, no Jew "could be forced to become a farmer". "The industries and trades practised in the context of village life were also allowed to them."[39] (One hundred and fifty years have passed. Forgetful of the past, an eminent and most enlightened Jewish physicist formulates his vision of Jewish life in those days: "A Pale of Settlement coupled with the prohibition (!) of practicing agriculture."[40] "The historian and thinker M. Guerchenson uses a more general formulation: "Agriculture is forbidden to the Jew by the spirit of his people because, by attaching to the land, man takes root more easily in a given place."[41])

The influential Minister of Finance, Cancrin, proposed to place the deserted lands of Siberia at the disposal of Jewish agriculture; Nicolas gave his approval to this project at the end of the same year 1835. It was proposed to attribute to Jewish settlers "up to 15 hectares of good land per male individual", with tools and workhorses billed to the Treasury, and paid transportation costs, including food. It seems that poor Jews, laden with large families, were tempted to undertake this journey to Siberia. But this time the *Kehalim* were divided in their calculations: these poor Jews were indeed necessary to satisfy the needs of recruitment (instead of wealthy families); it was concealed from them that the arrears were all handed over to them and they were required to carry them out beforehand. But the government changed its mind, fearing the difficulties of a transfer so far away, and that the Jews, on the spot, lacking examples of know-how and love of work, and would resume their "sterile trade, which rested essentially on dishonest operations that have already done so much harm in the western provinces of the empire", their "innkeeper occupations of ruining inhabitants by satisfying their inclination for drinking," and so on. In 1837, therefore, the transfer to Siberia was stopped without the reasons being publicised.[42] In the same year, the Inspectorate estimated that in New Russia "the plots of land reserved for Jewish settlers contained a black potting soil of the highest quality, that they were 'perfectly suited to the cultivation of cereals, that the steppes were excellent for the production of hay and livestock farming'." (local authorities, however, disputed this assessment).[43]

Also in the same year of 1837, a Ministry of Public Goods was established, headed by Count P. Kiselyov, who was entrusted with the transition measure intended to prepare the abolition of serfdom, the task of "protecting the free cultivators" (the peasants of the Crown)—there were seven and a half million of them registered—including the Jewish farmers—but they were only 3,000 to 5,000 families, or "a drop of water in the sea, relative to the number of peasants of the Crown." Nevertheless, as soon as it was created, this ministry received numerous petitions and recriminations of all kinds coming from Jews. "Six months later it became clear that it would be necessary to give the Jews so much attention that the main tasks of the ministry would suffer."[44] In 1840, however, Kiselyov was also appointed president of a newly created committee (the sixth one[45]) "to determine the measures to be taken to reorganise the lives of the Jews in Russia", meaning he also was to tackle the Jewish problem.

In 1839, Kiselyov had a law passed by the State Council authorising the Jews on the waiting lists for recruitment to become cultivators (provided that they were doing so with their whole family), which signified that they would benefit from the major advantage of being dispensed with military service. In 1844, "a still more detailed settlement concerning Jewish farmers" gave them—even in the Pale of Settlement—the right to employ for three years Christians who were supposed to teach them how to properly manage a farm. In 1840, "many Jews came to New Russia supposedly at their own expense (they produced on the spot 'attestations' that they had the means to do so), in fact, they had nothing and made it known from their very first days that their resources were exhausted"; "there were up to 1,800 families of which several hundred possessed neither papers nor any proof whatsoever of where they came from and how they found themselves in New Russia"; and "they never ceased to come running, begging not to be left to rot in their misery." Kiselyov ordered to receive them by levying the spendings to the "settlers in general, without distinction of ethnic group." In other words, he assisted them well beyond the amounts provided for. In 1847, "additional ordinances" were enacted to make it easier for Jews to become farmers.[46]

Through his ministry, Kiselyov had the ambition to establish model colonies and then "to eventually settle this people on a large scale": for this purpose, he set up one after the other colonies in the province of Ekaterinoslav, on

fertile soils, well irrigated by rivers and streams, with excellent pastures and hay fields, hoping very much that the new settlers would benefit from the remarkable experience already gained by the German settlers, (but as it was difficult to find volunteers among them to settle in the midst of the Jewish settlements, it was decided to employ them as wage earners). New credits were constantly granted to these future model colonies; all arrears were remitted to them. In the second year of their settlement, Jewish families were required to have at least one vegetable garden and one seeded hectare, and to ensure a slow increase in the area sown over the years. Insofar as they had no experience in the selection of livestock, this task was entrusted to the curators. Kiselyov sought to facilitate the travelling conditions of families (accompanied by a small number of day labourers) and to find ways to provide specialised agricultural training to a certain contingent of settlers. But in some families there was still very little to worry about agronomy: in extreme cold, people did not even go out to feed the beasts—so they had to equip them with long hooded coats![47]

In the meantime, the flow of Jews migrating to agriculture did not dry up, especially since the western provinces suffered from bad harvests. Families that did not include the necessary number of able-bodied men were often dispatched, "the *Kehalim* sent by force the destitute and invalid, retaining the rich and healthy to have the possibility of better responding to collections, to pay royalties and thereby maintain their institutions." "In order to prevent the influx of a large number of needy destitutes," the ministry had to demand that the governors of the western provinces have strict control over the departures—but, on site, departures of contingents were hastened without even waiting to know whether lodging was ready; moreover, the credits allocated to the starters were retained, which sometimes compromised a whole year of agricultural work. In the province of Ekaterinoslav, there was not even time to distribute the land to the volunteers: 250 families left on their own to settle in Odessa.[48]

However, the reports of various inspectors from different places blended as one: "By submitting to this end, [the Jews] could make good, or even excellent, farmers, but they take advantage of the first occasion to abandon the plough, to sacrifice their farms, and to return to horse-trading and their favourite occupations." "For the Jew, the number one job is the industry, even the most humble, of total insignificance, but on condition that it provides the greatest profit margin… Their fundamentally industrious mindset found no satisfaction in the peaceful life of the cultivator", "did not create in them the slightest desire to devote themselves to agriculture; what attracted them there was first and foremost the abundance of land, the scarcity of the Jewish population, the proximity of borders, trade and lucrative industry, not to mention the franchises which exempted them from royalties and conscription." They thought they would only be compelled to organise their houses; as to lands, they hoped to "lease them at an appreciable rate, in order to occupy themselves, as in the past, with commerce and industry." (This is what they declared naively to the inspectors.) And "it was with total disgust that they tackled the work of the earth." Moreover, "religious rules… did not favour the Jewish cultivators", they forced them to long periods of inactivity, as, for example, during the spring plantings, the long Passover holiday; In September, that of the Tabernacles lasted fourteen days "at the time when intensive agricultural work, such as soil preparation and sowing, is needed, although, according to the opinion of Jews who deserve all trust, Scripture requires strict observance during the first and last two days of the celebrations." On the other hand, the spiritual leaders of Jewish settlements (there were sometimes as many as two prayer houses, one for the Orthodox—or *Mitnagdes*—, another for the *Hasidim*) entertained the idea that as a chosen people they were not destined for the hard work of the farmer, which is the bitter lot of the *goyim*." "They rose late, devoted an entire hour to prayer, and went away to work when the sun was already high in the sky"—to which was added the Sabbath, resting from Friday night until Sunday morning.[49]

From a Jewish point of view, I. Orchansky actually arrives at conclusions similar to those of the inspectors: "Leasing a farm and employing wage-earners… encounters more sympathy among the Jews than the passage, in all regards difficult, to agricultural labour… We note a growing tendency for Jews engaged in rural activity to exercise it first and foremost by leasing land and using it through the assistance of wage-earners. In New Russia, the failures of Jewish agriculture stem from "their lack of accustomed to physical labour and the profits they derive from urban trades in southern Russia." But also to emphasise the fact that in a given colony the Jews "had built a synagogue *with their own hands*," and that in others maintained vegetable gardens "with their own hands."[50]

Nevertheless, the numerous reports of the inspectors agreed that in the 40s and in these "model" colonies, as in the past, "the standard of living of the settlers, their activities and their enterprises were well behind those of the peasants of the Crown or landowners." In the province of Kherson, in 1845, among the Jewish settlers, "The farms are in a very

unsatisfactory state, most of these settlers are very poor: they dread the work of the land, and few cultivate it properly; also, even in years of good harvest, they obtain only low yields"; "In the plots, the soil is hardly stirred," women and children hardly work the land and "a lot of 30 hectares is barely enough for their daily subsistence." "The example of the German settlers is followed only by a very small number of Jewish residents; most of them 'show a clear aversion' to agriculture and they 'comply with the demands of the authorities only to receive a passport that allows them to go…' They leave a lot of land in fallow, work the land only in certain places, according to the goodwill of each one… they treat the cattle with too much negligence… harass the horses until they die, nourish them little, especially on the days of the Sabbath"; they milk delicate cows of the German race at any hour of the day, so that they no longer give milk. "Jews were provided free fruit trees, 'but they did not plant orchards.' Houses had been built in advance for them—some were 'elegant, very dry and warm, solid'; in other places, they had been poorly constructed and expensive, but even where they had been built reliably, with good quality materials… the negligence of the Jews, their inability to keep their lodgings in good condition… had led them to such a state of degradation that they could no longer be inhabited without urgent repairs"; they were invaded by humidity which led to their decay and favoured diseases; many houses were abandoned, others were occupied by several families at the same time 'without there being any kinship between them, and, in view of the impetuous character of these people and their propensity to quarrels', such cohabitation gave rise to endless complaints."[51]

Responsibility for unpreparedness for this large migration is evident to both parties: poor coordination and delays in the administration's actions; here and there, the development of the houses, poorly guarded, left much to be desired, giving rise to many abuses and waste. (This led to the transfer of several officials and trials for some of them.) But in the Jewish villages, the elders also reluctantly controlled the careless ones whose farm and equipment deteriorated; hence the appointment of supervisors chosen among retired non-commissioned officers whom the Jews got drunk and coaxed with bribes. Hence also the impossibility of levying royalties on the settlers, either on account of indigence—"in every community there were only about ten farmers who were barely capable of paying for themselves"— or because of the "natural inclination of the Jews to evade their payment"; over the years, arrears only increased and they were given again and again without requiring any reimbursement. For each day of absence without authorisation, the settler paid only 1 kopeck, which hardly weighed on him, and he easily compensated for it with the gains he made in the city. (By way of comparison: in the villages the *Melamed* received from 3,000 to 10,000 rubles per year, and in parallel to the *Melamed* there had been an attempt to introduce into the colonies, in addition to the use of the Jewish language, a general education based on Russian and arithmetic, but "simple people" had little "confidence in the educational institutions founded by the government."[52])

"It became more and more indisputable that the 'model colonies' so ardently desired by Kiselyov were just a dream"; but, while curbing (1849) the sending of new families, he did not lose hope and affirmed again in 1852 in one of his resolutions: "The more arduous an affair, the more one must be firm and not to be discouraged by the first lack of successes." Until then, the curator was not the true leader of the colony, "he sometimes has to put up with the mockery and insolence of the settlers who understood very well that he had no power over them"; he was entitled only to advise them. More than once, due to the exasperation provoked by failures, projects had been proposed which would have consisted in giving the settlers compulsory lessons in such a way that they would have to put them into practice within a period of two or three days, with a verification of results; to deprive them of the free disposal of their land; to radically eliminate leave of absence; and even to introduce punishments: up to thirty lashes the first time, double in case of recidivism, then prison, and, depending on the seriousness of the offense, enlistment in the army. (Nikitin asserts that this project of instruction, as soon as it was known, "exerted such terror upon the Jewish cultivators, that they redoubled their efforts, and hastened to procure cattle, to furnish themselves with agricultural tools… and showed an astonishing zeal in the work of the fields and the care taken to their house." But Kiselyov gave his approval to a watered-down project (1853): "The lessons must correspond perfectly to the capacities and experience of those for whom they are intended", the instructor responsible for organising agricultural work can deviate from it only in the sense of a reduction in tasks, and for the first offense, no punishment, for the second and third, ten to twenty lashes, no more. (Enlistment in the army was never applied, "no one… has ever been made a soldier for his failings at work," and in 1860, the act was definitively repealed.[53])

Let us not forget that we were still in the age of serfdom. But half a century after the conscientious attempts of the government to entice the Jews to provide productive labour on virgin lands, the outlines of the villages of Arakcheyev[*]

began to appear.

It is astonishing that the imperial power did not understand, at this stage, the sterility of the measures taken, the desperate character of this whole enterprise of returning to the land.

Furthermore, the process was not over…

*

After the introduction of compulsory military service, alarming rumours spread among the Jewish population, announcing a new and terrible legislation prepared especially by the "Jewish Committee". But in 1835, a General Regulation concerning the Jews was finally promulgated (intended to replace that of 1804), and, as the *Jewish Encyclopædia* discreetly notes, "it imposed no new limitations on the Jews."[54] If we want to know more: this new regulation "preserved for Jews the right to acquire all kinds of immovable property excluding inhabited areas, to conduct all kinds of commerce on an equal footing with other subjects, but only within the Pale of Settlement."[55] These Regulations of 1835 confirmed the protection of all the rights recognised to the Jewish faith, introduced distinctions for the rabbis, conferring on them the rights granted to the merchants of the first guild; established a reasonable age to marry (18 and 16 years old); adopted measures to ensure that the Jewish attire did not differ too much and did not cut off the Jews from the surrounding population; oriented the Jews towards means of earning their livelihood through productive labour (which prohibited only the sale of spirits on credit or secured on domestic effects), authorised all kinds of industrial activities (including the renting of distilleries). To have Christians in their service was forbidden only for regular employment but authorised "for short-term work" (without the time limits being specified) and "for work in factories and factories", as well as "as an aide in the work of the fields, gardens and vegetable gardens"[56] which sounded like a mockery of the very idea of "Jewish agriculture". The Regulations of 1835 called upon Jewish youth to educate itself; it did not restrict Jewish enrolment to secondary schools or university.[57] Jews who had received the rank of doctor in any discipline, once recognised (not without formalities) of their distinguished qualities, were entitled to enter in the service of the State. (Jewish doctors already enjoyed this right.) With regard to local government, the Regulation abrogated the previous limitations: from now on, Jews could hold office in local councils, magistrates and municipalities "under the same conditions as if members of other faiths had been elected to office." (It is true that some local authorities, particularly in Lithuania, objected to this provision: in certain circumstances, the mayor has to lead his citizens to church—how could a Jew do it? Also, can a Jew sit among the judges when the oath is sworn on the cross? In the face of these strong reservations, a decree in 1836 stipulated that in the western provinces the Jews could occupy in the magistracy and the municipalities only one third of the positions.[58]) Finally, with regard to the thorny economic problem inherent in cross-border smuggling, which was so detrimental to the interests of the State, the Regulation permitted the Jews already residing there to remain there, but prohibited any new installations.[59]

For a State that still maintained millions of its subjects in serfdom, all that has just been mentioned might not appear as a system of cruel constraints.

During the examination of the Regulation before the Council of State, the discussions concerned the possibility of allowing the Jews free access to the internal provinces of Great Russia, and the opinions expressed on this subject were as numerous as they were varied. Some argued that "to admit the Jews to settle in the central provinces, they had to be able to justify certain moral qualities and a sufficient level of education"; others replied that "Jews can be of great use because of their commercial and industrial activity, and that competition cannot be prevented by prohibiting anybody from residing and practising commerce"; "it is necessary to raise the problem… plainly put: can the Jews be tolerated in this country? If one considers that they cannot be so, then all must be cast out," rather than "leave this category in the midst of the nation in a situation likely to engender in them continuous discontent and grumbles." And "if it is necessary to tolerate their presence in this country, then it is important to free them from any limitations placed on their rights."[60]

Moreover, the "archaic Polish privileges (abandoned by the Russian State since the reign of Catherine) which granted urban communities the power to introduce restrictions on the right of residence for the Jews" reappeared with

further acuteness in Vilnius first, then in Kiev. In Vilnius, the Jews were forbidden to settle in certain parts of the city. In Kiev, the local merchants were indignant that "the Jews, to the great displeasure of every one, engage in commerce and business between the walls of the monasteries of Pechersk[*]… that they take over all commercial establishments in Pechersk" and exclude "trade Christians"; they urged the Governor-General to obtain a ban (1827) "on the Jews to live permanently in Kiev… Only a few categories of individuals would be able to go there for a determined period of time." "As always in such circumstances, the Government was obliged to postpone on several occasions the deadline set for their expulsion." The discussions went back to the "Directorial Committee", divided the Council of State into two equal camps, but under the terms of the Regulation of 1835 Nicolas confirmed the expulsion of the Jews from Kiev. However, shortly after, "certain categories of Jews were again allowed to reside temporarily in Kiev." (But why were Jews so lucky in commercial competition? Often, they sold at lower prices than Christians, contenting themselves with a "lesser profit" than the Christians demanded; but in some cases, their merchandise was deemed to have come from smuggling, and the governor of Kiev, who had taken the defense of the Jews, remarked that "if the Christians were willing to take the trouble, they could oust the Jews without these coercive measures."[61]) Thus, "in Belarus, the Jews had the right to reside only in the towns; In Little Russia, they could live everywhere, with the exception of Kiev and certain villages; In New Russia, in all inhabited places with the exception of Nikolayev and Sevastopol,"[62] military ports from which the Jews had been banned for reasons related with the security of the State.

"The 1835 Regulations allowed merchants and [Jewish] manufacturers to participate in the main fairs of the interior provinces in order to temporarily trade there, and granted them the right to sell certain goods outside the Pale of Settlement."[63] In the same way, artisans were not entirely deprived of access to the central provinces, even if only temporarily. According to the Regulation of 1827, "the authorities of the provinces outside the Pale of Settlement had the right to authorise the Jews to remain there for six months."[64] Hessen points out that the 1835 Regulations "and subsequent laws extended somewhat for the Jews the possibility of temporarily living outside the Pale of Settlement", especially since the local authorities turned a blind eye "when the Jews bypassed the prohibitions."[65] Leskov confirms in a note he wrote at the request of the governmental committee: "In the 40s", the Jews "appeared in the villages of Great Russia belonging to the great landowners in order to offer their services… Throughout the year, they rendered timely visits 'to the lords of their acquaintance'" in the neighbouring provinces of Great Russia, and everywhere they traded and tackled work. "Not only were the Jews not driven out, they were retained." "Usually, people welcomed and gave refuge to Jewish artisans…; everywhere the local authorities treated them with kindness, for, as for the other inhabitants, the Jews provided important advantages."[66] "With the help of interested Christians, the Jews violated the limiting decrees. And the authorities were in their turn incited to derogate from the laws… In the provinces of Central Russia, it was decided to fix fines to be imposed on the owners who let the Jews settle in their home."[67]

This is how, led by conservative (more specifically religious) considerations of not wanting fusion between Christians and Jews, the authorities of the Russian state, faced with the economic push that attracted Jews beyond the Pale of Settlement, were unable either to make a clear decision or to clearly apply it in practice. As for the dynamic and enterprising character of the Jews, it suffered from too much territorial concentration and too strong internal competition; it was natural for them to overflow as widely as possible. As I. Orchansky observed: "The more the Jews are scattered among the Christian population, the higher is their standard of living."[68]

But it would be hard to deny that, even in its official perimeter, the Pale of Settlement for Jews in Russia was very large: in addition to what had been inherited from the dense Jewish grouping in Poland, the provinces of Vilnius, Grodno, Kaunas, Vitebsk, Minsk, Mogilev, Volhynia, Podolsk and Kiev (in addition to Poland and Courland) were added the vast and fertile provinces of Poltava, Ikaterinoslav, Chernigov, Tauride, Kherson and Bessarabia, all together larger than any state, or even group of European states. (A short time later, from 1804 to the mid-30s, the rich provinces of Astrakhan and the Caucasus were added, but the Jews hardly settled there; again in 1824, in Astrakhan, "no Jew was registered as taxable."[69] This made fifteen provinces within the Pale of Settlement, compared with thirty-one for "Deep Russia". And few were more populous than the provinces of central Russia. As for the Jews' share of the population, it did not exceed that of the Moslems in the provinces of the Urals or the Volga. Thus the density of Jews in the Pale of Settlement did not result from their number, but rather from the uniformity of their occupations. It was only in the immensity of Russia that such an area might seem cramped.

It is objected that the extent of this area was illusory: it excluded all zones outside cities and other agglomerations. But these spaces were agricultural areas or intended for agriculture, and it was understood that this domain, accessible to the Jews, did not attract them; their whole problem was rather how to use these spaces for alcohol trade. Which was a deviation.

And if the large Jewish mass had not moved from narrow Poland to vast Russia, the very concept of the Pale of Settlement would never have been born. In narrow Poland, the Jews would have lived densely piled up, with greater poverty, growing rapidly without carrying out any productive work, 80% of the population practising petty trade and the dealing of intermediaries.

In any case, nowhere in Russian cities were implemented obligatory ghettos for the Jews, as was still known here and there in Europe. (If not the suburb of Glebovo, in Moscow, for those who went there as visitors.)

Let us remember once more that this Pale of Settlement coexisted for three quarters of a century with the serfdom of the majority of the Russian rural population, and so, by comparison, the weight of these limitations to the freedom of coming and going was somewhat lifted. In the Russian Empire, many peoples lived by millions in high density areas within their respective regions. Within the borders of a multinational state, peoples often lived compactly more or less as separate entities. So it was with the example of the Karaites and the Jews "of the mountains", the latter having the freedom to choose their place of residence but which they hardly used. No comparison is possible with the territorial limits, the "reserves" imposed on the native populations of conquered countries by colonisers (Anglo-Saxons or Spanish) who came from elsewhere.

It is precisely the absence of a national territory among the Jews, given the dynamism they displayed in their movements, their highly practical sense, their zeal in the economic sphere, which promised to become imminently an important factor influencing the life of the country as a whole. We can say that it is on the one hand, the Jewish Diaspora's need to access all the existing functions, and on the other, the fear of an overflow of their activity which fuelled the limiting measures taken by the Russian government.

Yes, as a whole, the Jews of Russia turned away from agriculture. In crafts, they were preferably tailors, shoemakers, watchmakers, jewellers. However, despite the constraints imposed by the Pale, their productive activity was not limited to these small trades.

The *Jewish Encyclopædia* published before the Revolution writes that for the Jews, before the development of heavy industry, "what was most important was the trade of money; irrespective of whether the Jew intervened as a pawnbroker or money changer, as a farmer of public or private income, as tenant or tenant—he was primarily involved in financial transactions." For even in the period of rural economy in Russia, "the demand for money was already felt in ever-increasing proportions."[70] Thence, the transfer of Jewish capital into this industry for them to participate in it. Already, under Alexander I, energetic arrangements had been made to encourage the participation of Jews in industry, especially in drapery. "It subsequently played an important part in the accumulation of capital in the hands of the Jews," and then "they did not fail to use this capital successively in factories and plants, mining, transportation and banking. Thus began the formation of a lower and upper Jewish *bourgeoisie*.[71] The Regulations of 1835 "also provided privileges for Jewish manufacturers."[72]

By the 40s of the nineteenth century, the sugar industry had grown considerably in the south-western provinces. First, The Jewish capitalists began by granting subsidies to the refineries belonging to the landowners, then by assuming their administration, followed by becoming owners, and finally building their own factories. In Ukraine and New Russia, powerful "sugar kings", among others Lazare and Lev Brodski. "Most of these Jewish sugar producers had begun in the distillery of alcohol… or as tenants of cabarets." This situation also took place in flour-milling.[73]

At the time, no contemporary understood or bothered to foresee what power was being accumulated there, material first, then spiritual. Of course, Nicholas I was the first not to see, nor understand. He had too high an opinion of the omnipotence of the imperial power and of the efficiency of military-type administrative methods.

But he obstinately desired success in the education of the Jews so that the Jews could overcome their

extraneousness in relation to the rest of the population, situation in which he saw a major danger. As early as 1831, he pointed out to the "Directors Committee" that "among the measures likely to improve the situation of the Jews, special attention should be given to raising them via education… by the creation of factories, the prohibition of precocious marriages, a better organisation of the *Kehalim*…, a change in clothing customs."[74] And in 1840, when the "Committee in charge of identifying measures for a radical transformation of the life of Jews in Russia" was founded, one of the first aims envisaged by this committee was "to promote the moral development of the new generation by the creation of Jewish schools in a spirit contrary to the Talmudic teaching currently in force."[75]

All the progressive Jews of that time also wanted general education (they were only divided on whether to totally exclude the Talmud from the program or to study it in the upper grades, "with the illumination of a scientific approach, thus relieved from undesirable additions"[76]). A newly established general education school in Riga was headed by a young graduate of the University of Munich, Max Lilienthal, who aspired to invest himself in the "spread of education among Russian Jews." In 1840, he was cordially received in Saint Petersburg by the ministers of the interior and education, and wrote to the "Committee for the Transformation of the Life of the Jews" proposing the project of a consistory and theology seminary with the aim of training rabbis and teachers "according to pure ethical foundations", as opposed to "calcified talmudists"; However, "before acquiring the essential principles of faith, it would not be permissible to study profane matters." Thus the ministerial project was modified: the number of hours devoted to the teaching of Jewish matters was increased.[77] Lilienthal also sought to persuade the government to take preventive measures against the *Hasidim*, but without success: government power "wanted a front unifying the various Jewish social milieux who waged war."[78] Lilienthal, who had developed his school in Riga "with amazing success", was invited by the Ministry to visit the provinces of the Pale of Settlement in order to contribute to the work of education, through public meetings and conferences with Jewish personalities. His journey, at least externally, was a great success; as a general rule, he met with little open hostility and seemed to have succeeded in convincing the influential circles of the Jewish world. "The enemies… of the reform… had to express their approval outwardly." But the hidden opposition was, of course, very important. And when school reform was finally applied, Lilienthal renounced his mission. In 1844, he left unexpectedly for the United States, never to return. "His departure from Russia—perhaps a way of escape—remains shrouded in mystery."[79]

Thus, under Nicholas I, not only did the authorities not oppose the assimilation of the Jews, but rather they called for it; however, the Jewish masses who remained under the influence of the *Kahal*, feared constraining measures in the religious sphere, and so did not lend themselves to it.

Nevertheless, school reform did begin in 1844, despite the extreme resistance of the leaders of the *Kehalim*. (And although "in creating these Jewish schools there was no attempt to reduce the number of Jews in general schools, on the contrary, it was pointed out that they should, as before, be open to the Jews."[80]) Two kinds of Jewish public schools were created ("modelled on Jewish elementary schools in Austria"[81]): two years, corresponding to Russian parish schools, and four years, corresponding to district schools. Only Jewish disciplines were taught by Jewish (and Hebrew) teachers; the others were given by Russian teachers. (As Lev Deitch, a frenzied revolutionary, admits, "The crowned monster ordered them [Jewish children] to learn Russian."[82]) For many years, these schools were led by Christians, and were only led by Jews much later.

"Faithful to traditional Judaism, having learned or overshadowed the secret objective of Uvarov [Minister of Education], the majority of the Jewish population saw in these government measures of education a means of persecution like the others."[83] (Said Uvarov, who, for his part, sought to bring the Jews closer to the Christian population by eradicating "prejudices inspired by the precepts of the Talmud", wanted to exclude the latter entirely from the education system, considering it as an anti-Christian compendium[84]). Continuing for many years to distrust the Russian authorities, the Jewish population turned away from these schools and fuelling a real phobia of them: "Just as the population sought to escape conscription, it distrusted these schools, fearing to leave their children in these homes of "free-thinking". Well-off Jewish families often sent to public schools not their own offspring, but those of the poor.[85] Thus was entrusted to a public school P. B. Axelrod[*]; He then went on to college, and then obtained broad political notoriety as Plekhanov and Deitch's companion in the struggle within the Liberation of Labour[86]). If in 1855 only the

duly registered *Heder* had 70,000 Jewish children, the public schools of both types received only 3,200.[87]

This fear of public education was perpetuated for a long time in Jewish circles. In this way, Deitch remembers the 60s, not the middle of nowhere, but in Kiev: “I remember the time when my countrymen considered it a sin to learn Russian” and only tolerated its use “in relations with the *goyim*.”[88] A. G. Sliozberg remembers that, until the 70s, entering college was regarded as a betrayal of the essence of Jewishness, the college uniform being a sign of apostasy. “Between Jews and Christians there was an abyss which only a few Jews could cross, and only in the great cities where Jewish public opinion did not paralyse the will of all.”[89] Young people attached to Jewish traditions did not aspire to study in Russian universities, although the final diploma, according to the Recruitment Law of 1827, dispensed one of military service for life. However, Hessen points out that among Russian Jews belonging to “the most affluent circles”, “the spontaneous desire to integrate… the public schools was growing.”[90]

He adds that in Jewish public schools “not only the Christian superintendents but the majority of Jewish teachers who taught the Jewish disciplines in the German language were far from the required level.” Thus, “in parallel with the establishment of these public schools, it was decided to organise a graduate school intended for the training of teachers, to form better educated rabbis capable of acting progressively on the Jewish masses. Rabbinic schools of this type were founded in Vilnius and Zhytomir (1847).” “Despite their shortcomings, these schools were of some use,” according to the testimony of the liberal J. Hessen, “the rising generation was familiarising itself with the Russian language and its grammar.”[91] The revolutionary Mr. Krol was of the same opinion, but he also condemned the government unreservedly: “The laws of Nicholas I instituting primary public schools and rabbinic schools were reactionary and hostile to the Jews; schools, willingly or unwillingly, allowed a small number of Jewish children to learn secular education. As for the “enlightened” intellectuals (the *Maskilim*) and those who now despised the “superstitions of the masses”, they “had no place to go”, according to Krol, and remained strangers amongst their own. “Nevertheless, this evolution played an enormous role in the spiritual awakening of Russian Jews during the second half of the nineteenth century,” even if the *Maskilim*, who wanted to enlighten the Jewish masses, met with “the fierce opposition of fanatical Jewish believers who saw in profane science an alienation of the devil.”[92]

In 1850 a kind of superstructure was created: an institute of “Jewish scholars”, as well as a consulting inspectorate among the heads of academies.

Those who came from the newly created rabbinical schools occupied in 1857 the functions of “public rabbis”; Elected unwillingly by their community, their designation was subject to the approval of the authorities of their province. But their responsibility remained purely administrative: the Jewish communities regarded them as ignoramuses in the Hebrew sciences, and the traditional rabbis were maintained as genuine “spiritual rabbis.”[93] (Numerous graduates of rabbinic schools, “found no positions, neither as rabbis nor teachers”, pursued their studies at university[94], then became doctors or lawyers.)

Nicholas I did not release his pressure to regulate the internal life of the Jewish community. The *Kahal*, who already possessed an immense power over the community, grew even stronger from the moment conscription was introduced: it was given the right to “give for recruitment at any moment every Jew who did not pay his royalties, who had no fixed abode or committed intolerable misdemeanors in Jewish society,” and it used this right for the benefit of the rich. “All this nourished the indignation of the masses towards the rulers of the *Kehalim* and became one of the causes of the irremediable decline of the *Kahal*.” Thus, in 1844, the *Kehalim* “were dissolved everywhere, and their functions were transmitted to municipalities and town halls”[95]; In other words, urban Jewish communities found themselves subject to the uniform legislation of the state. But this reform was not completed either: the collection of the arduous and evanescent arrears and the lifting of the recruits were again entrusted to the Jewish community, whose “recruiters” and tax collectors were substituted for the ancients of the *Kehalim*. As for the registry of births, and thus the counting of the population, they remained in the hands of the rabbis.

The government of Nicolas also took a position on the inextricable problem of the internal tax collection of Jewish communities, first of all on the so-called “casket” (indirect tax on the consumption of kosher meat). A provision of 1844 specified that part of the proceeds should be used to cover public arrears in the community, to finance the organisation

of Jewish schools and to distribute subsidies to Jews who devoted themselves to agriculture.[96] But there was also an unexpected imbroglio: although the Jews "were subject to the capitation on the same basis as the Christian *bourgeois*", that is, to a direct tax, "the Jewish population, thanks to the amount of the "casket", were, it is to say, in a privileged position to pay the royalty"; in fact, from then on "Jews, including the wealthiest, covered by personal payments only an insignificant part of the taxes owed to the tax authorities, turning the balance into arrears," and these never ceased to accumulate: by the mid-50s, they exceeded 8 million rubles. There followed a new imperial decree dictated by exasperation: "for every 2,000 rubles" of new arrears, "an adult had to be provided as recruit."[97]

In 1844 a new and energetic attempt was made—again aborted—to expel the Jews from the villages.

Hessen pictorially writes that "in Russian laws designed to normalise the lives of Jews, one hears as a cry of despair: in spite of all its authority, the government fails to extirpate the existence of the Jews from the depths of Russian life."[98]

No, the leaders of Russia had not yet realised the full weight and even the "unassimilability" of the immense Jewish legacy received as a gift under the successive divisions of Poland: what to do with this intrinsically resistant and rapidly expanding group in the Russian national body? They could not find reliable rulings and were all the more incapable of foreseeing the future. The energetic measures of Nicholas I surged one after the other, but the situation was apparently only getting more complicated.

A similar failure, which was escalating, followed Nicholas I in his struggle against the Jewish contrabands at the frontiers. In 1843 he categorically ordered the expulsion of all Jews from a buffer zone of fifty kilometres deep adjacent to Austria and Prussia, in spite of the fact that "at some frontier customs the merchants who traded were practically all Jews."[99] The measure was immediately corrected by numerous exemptions: first, a two-year period was allowed for the sale of the goods, and then the duration was extended, and material assistance was offered to the expellees for their new settlement; furthermore, they were exempted for five years from all royalties. For several years the transfer was not even initiated, and soon "the government of Nicholas I stopped insisting on the expulsion of the Jews from this border strip of fifty kilometres, which allowed some of them to stay where they lived."[100]

It was on this occasion that Nicolas received a new warning of which he did not measure the extent and the consequences for the whole of Russia: this formidable but very partially enforced measure, intended to expel the Jews from the frontier zone, motivated by a contraband which had assumed an extension dangerous to the State, had aroused in Europe such indignation that it may be asked whether it was not this measure that drastically confused European public opinion with Russia. It may be said that this particular decree of 1843 must date from the very beginning of the era when the Western Jewish world, in the defense of its co-religionists in Russia, began to exert a decisive influence, which, from then on, would never fall again.

One of the manifestations of this new attention was the arrival in Russia in 1846 of Sir Moses Montefiore, the bearer of a letter of recommendation from Queen Victoria instructing him to obtain the "improvement of the fate of the Jewish population" of Russia. He went to several cities of high Jewish density; then, from England, sent a long letter to the emperor recommending the emancipation of the Jews from all limiting legislation, to grant them "equal rights with all other subjects" (with the exception, of course, of the serfs), "in the short term: to abolish all constraints in the exercise of the right to settle and to circulate between the boundaries of the Pale of Settlement", to allow merchants and craftsmen to visit the provinces, "to allow Christians to be employed in the service of the Jews…, to restore the *Kahal*…"[101]

But, on the contrary, Nicolas did not relinquish his determination to bring order to the lives of the Jews of Russia. He resembled Peter the Great in his resolution to structure by decree the whole State and the whole of society according to his plan, and to reduce the complexity of society to simple, easily understood categories, as Peter had formerly "trimmed" all that disturbed the clear configuration of the taxable classes.

This time it was a question of differentiating the Jewish population from the towns—the *bourgeois*. This project began in 1840; when the intention was to go beyond the national and religious singularity of the Jews (the opinions of

Levinson, Feiguine, and Gueseanovsky were then examined), they endeavoured to "study the root of their obstinate isolation" in relation to "the absence of any productive work in them", their "harmful practice of small trades, accompanied by all sorts of frauds and tricks." Regarding the "idleness" of many Jews, the government circles blamed it on "inveterate habits"; they considered that "the Jewish mass might have been able to find livelihoods, but traditionally refused to exercise certain types of employment."[102]

Count Kiselyov proposed to the Emperor the following measure: without affecting the Jewish merchants, perfectly well-settled, to worry about the so-called *bourgeois* Jews, more precisely to divide them into two categories: to count in the first those who benefit from goods and a solid sedentary lifestyle, and include in the second those who are devoid of these factors and set a period of five years for them to be made craftsmen in workshops, or farmers. (One regarded as an artisan the one who enrolled forever in a workshop: as a sedentary *bourgeois*, one who had enrolled in a workshop for a certain time.[103]) As for those who did not fulfil these conditions at the end of the period of five years and remained confined to their former state, they would be considered "useless" and subjected to military service and a period of work of a particular type: they would be enrolled in the army (those 20 years old and onwards) in number three times higher than the standard required, not for the usual twenty-five years of military service, but for only ten. And, meanwhile, "they would be used in the army or the navy by instilling in them, above all, different trades and then, with their consent, they would make craftsmen or farmers". In other words, they would be forcibly given vocational education. But the government did not have the funds to do so and was considering using the "casket" tax, as Jewish society could only be interested in this effort to rehabilitate its members through labour.[104]

In 1840, Nicholas I gave his approval to the project. (The phrase "unnecessary Jews" was replaced by "not performing productive work.") All measures to transform the lives of the Jews were reduced to a single decree providing for the following steps: 1) "regularisation of the collection of the 'casket' and suppression of the *Kahal*"; 2) creation of general education schools for Jews; 3) institution of "parochial rabbis"; 4) "establishment of the Jews on land belonging to the State" for agricultural purposes; 5) categorisation; 6) prohibition to wear the long garment. Kiselyov thought of introducing social categorisation in a fairly distant future; Nicholas placed it before agriculture, which, for a quarter of a century, had not ceased to be a failure.[105]

However, the categorisation provided for a period of five years for the choice of occupations, and the measure itself was not announced until 1846, meaning it could not turn into a reality until January 1852. (In 1843 the Governor-General of New Russia, Count Vorontsov, rose up against this measure: he wrote that the occupations "of this numerous class of merchants and intermediaries were 'vilified' and that [80%] of the Jewish population was counted as 'useless' elements," which meant that 80% of the Jews were mainly engaged in trade, and Vorontsov hoped that, given the vast economic potential of New Russia, "any form of constraint could be limited", he did not think it necessary to expel the Jews from the villages, but thought that it was enough to intensify their education. He warned that the categorisation would probably arouse indignation in Europe.[106])

Scalded by the way Europe had reacted to the attempt to expel the Jews from the border area, the Russian government drew up a detailed statement on the new measure in 1846: in Poland, Jews had neither citizenship nor the right to own immovable property, and was therefore restricted to petty trading and the sale of alcohol; incorporated in Russia, they saw the limits of their residence extended, they received civil rights, access to the class of merchants in the cities, the right to own real estate, to enter the category of farmers, the right to education, including access to universities and academies.[107]

It must be admitted that the Jews did receive all these rights from the first decades of their presence in the famous "prison of the peoples". Nevertheless, a century later, in a collection written by Jewish authors, one finds the following assessment: "When the annexation to Russia of the Polish provinces with their Jewish population, *promises* were made concerning Rights, and *attempts* to realise them [italics are mine, A. S.; said promises were kept, and the attempts were not without success]. But at the same time, mass expulsions outside villages had begun (indeed, they had been outlined, but were never effective), double taxation was implemented [which was not levied in a systematic way, and eventually abandoned] and to the institution of the Pale of Settlement was undertaken"[108] [we have seen that the borders of this area were originally a geographical heritage]. If one thinks that this way of exposing history is objective, then one will never reach the truth.

Unfortunately, however, the government communiqué of 1846 pointed out that the Jews did not take advantage of many of these measures: “Constantly defying integration with the civil society in which they live, most kept their old way of life, taking advantage of the work of others, which, on all sides, legitimately entails the complaints of the inhabitants.” “For the purpose [of raising the standard of living of the Jews], it is important to free them from their dependence on the elders of the community, the heirs of the former leaders of the *Kahal*, to spread education and practical knowledge in the Jewish population, to create Jewish schools of general education, to provide means for their passage to agriculture, to blur the differences of clothing which are unfair to many Jews. As for the government, “it esteems itself entitled to hope that the Jews will abandon all their reprehensible ways of living and turn to a truly productive and useful work.” Only those who refuse to do so will be subject to “incentivised measures for parasitic members affecting society and harming it.”[109]

In his reply to this text, Montefiore condemned the categorisation by insisting that all the misfortune came from the limitations imposed on the free circulation of the Jews and their trade. Nicolas retorted that if the passage of the Jews to productive work was successful, time, “of itself, would gradually mitigate these limitations.”[110] He was counting on the possibility of re-education through work… Being held in check here and there, and elsewhere in his efforts to transform the way of life of the Jews, he had the ambition to break the Jews’ tendency to close in on themselves and to solve the problem of their integration with the surrounding population through labour, and the problem of labour by drastically reinforced conscription. The reduction of the length of military service for the Jews (from 25 to ten years) and the intention of providing them with vocational training was scarcely clear; what was perceived concretely was the levying of recruits, now proportionately three times more numerous than among Christians: “Ten recruits per year per thousand male inhabitants, and for Christians seven recruits per thousand once every two years.”[111]

Faced with this increase in recruitment, more people sought to escape. Those who were designated for conscription went into hiding. In retaliation, at the end of 1850, a decree stipulated that all recruits not delivered on time should be compensated by three additional recruits in addition to the defaulter! Now Jewish communities were interested in *capturing* the fugitives or replacing them with innocent people. (In 1853 a decree was issued enabling Jewish communities and private individuals to present as a recruit any person taken without papers.) The Jewish communities were seen to have paid “takers” or “snatchers” who captured their “catch”[112]; they received from the community a receipt attesting that the community had used their services when handing over those who did not respond to the call, or who carried expired passports—even if they were from another province—or teenagers without a family.

But that was not enough to compensate for the missing recruits. In 1852 two new decrees were added: the first provided for each recruit provided in excess of the quota imposed, to relieve the community of 300 rubles of arrears[113]; the second “prohibited the concealment of Jews who evaded military service and demanded severe punishment for those who had fled conscription, imposed fines on the communities that had hidden them, and, instead of the missing recruits, to enlist their relatives or the community leaders responsible for the delivery of the recruits within the prescribed time limits. Seeking by all means to escape recruitment, many Jews fled abroad or went to other provinces.”[114]

From then on, the recruitment gave rise to a real bacchanale: the “snatchers” became more and more fierce; on the contrary, men in good health and capable of working scurried off, went into hiding, and the backlogs of the communities grew. The sedentary and productive part uttered protests and demands: if recruitment began to strike to an equal extent the “useful elements” and those which do not exercise productive work, then the vagabonds will always find means of hiding and all the weight of the recruitment would fall on the “useful”, which would spread among them disorder and the ruin.”[115]

The administrative overflows made the absurdity of the situation clear because of the difficulties that ensued; questions were raised, for example, about the different types of activity: are they “useful” or not? This fired up the Saint Petersburg ministries.[116] The Council of State demanded that the social categorisation be delayed so long as the regulations of the workshops were not elaborated. The Emperor, however, did not want to wait. In 1851, the “Provisional Rules for the Categorisation of Jews”, and “Special Rules for Jewish Workshops” were published. The Jewish population was deeply concerned, but according to the testimony of the Governor General of the South-West, it

no longer believed that this categorisation would enter into force."

And, in fact, "… it did not take place; the Jewish population was not divided into categories."[118] In 1855, Nicholas I died suddenly, and categorisation was abandoned forever.

Throughout the years 1850–1855, the sovereign had, on the whole, displayed a limitless sense of pride and self-confidence, accumulating gross blunders which stupidly led us into the Crimean war against a coalition of States, before suddenly dying while the conflict was raging.

The sudden death of the Emperor saved the Jews from a difficult situation, just as they were to be saved a century later by the death of Stalin.

Thus ended the first six decades of massive presence of Jews in Russia. It must be acknowledged that neither their level nor their lack of clarity prepared the Russian authorities at that time to face such an ingrained, gnarled and complex problem. But to put on these Russian leaders the stamp "persecutors of the Jews" amounts to distorting their intentions and compounding their abilities.

Footnotes

- (1818–1881), The "liberator" tsar whose name is associated with the "great reforms" of the 1860s (abolition of serfdom, justice, the press, zemstvos, etc.) and the rise of the revolutionary movement; assassinated on March 13, 1881 by a commando of *the Will of the People*.

1. JE, t. 11, p. 709.
2. *Ibidem*, pp. 709–710.
3. *Hessen*, Istoria evreïskogo naroda v Rossii (History of the Jewish People in Russia), in 2 vol., t. 2, Leningrad, 1927, p. 27.
4. LJE, t. 7, p. 322.
5. JE, t. 11, pp. 709–710.
6. LJE, t. 2, p. 509.
7. JE, 1.11, p. 710.
8. *Hessen*, t. 2, pp. 30–31.
9. *V. N. Nikitin*, Evrei zemlevladeltsy: Istoritcheskoe. zakonodatelnoe, administrativnoe i bytovoe polojenie kolonij so vremeni ikh vozniknovenia do nachikh dneï [Jewish farmers: historical, legislative, administrative and concrete situation of the colonies from their creation to the present day], 1807–1887, Saint Petersburg, 1887, p. 263.
10. JE, t. 13, p. 371.
11. *Hessen**, t. 2, pp. 32–34.
12. JE, t. 11, pp. 468–469.
13. LJE, t. n7, p. 318.
14. *Hessen*, t. 2, pp. 68–71.
15. *Ibidem*, pp. 59–61.
16. LJE, t. 7, p. 317.
17. *Hessen*, t. 2, pp. 64–65.
18. *Ibidem*, p. 141.
19. *Ibidem*, p. 34.
20. LJE, t. 7, p. 317.
21. LJE. t. 4, pp. 75–76.
22. JE, t. 9 (which covers the years 1847–1854), p. 243.
23. *K. Korobkov*, Evreïskaïa rekroutchina v tsarstvovanie Nikolaia 1 (The Recruitment of Jews under the Reign of Nicolas I), in Evreïskaia starina, Saint Petersburg, 1913, t. 6, pp. 79–80.
24. JE, t. 9, pp. 242–243.
25. *Ibidem*, t. 7, pp. 443–444.
26. *Hessen*, t. 2. p. 39.
27. JE, i. 12, p. 787 ; Hessen, t. 2, p. 39.
28. *Ibidem*, t. 5, p. 613.
29. Russian Jewish Encyclopedia, 2nd ed. Reviewed, corrected and augmented, t. 1, Moscow, 1994, p. 317.

30. JE, t. 12. p. 163.
31. *Ibidem**, t. 11, p. 710.
32. Letter from V. I. Soloviev to T. Gertz, in *V. Soloviev*, Evrcïskij vopros - khristianskij vopros (The Jewish Problem is a Christian Problem), collection of articles, Warsaw, 1906, p. 25.
33. *Nicolas Leskov*, Evrei v Rossii: neskolko zametchanij po evreïskomou voprosou. (The Jews in Russia: A few remarks on the Jewish Problem). Petrograd, 1919 (reproduction of the ed. of 1884). p. 31.
34. *I. Orchansky*, Evrei v Rossii (Jews in Russia, essays and studies), fasc. 1, Saint Petersburg, 1872, pp. 192–195, 200–207.
35. *Ibidem*, pp. 114–116, 124–125.
36. *Nikitin**, pp. 168–169, 171.
37. *Ibidem*, pp. 179–181.
38. *Ibidem**, pp. 185–186. 190–191.
39. *Nikitin**, pp. 193–197.
40. *E. Gliner*, Stikhia s tchelovctchcskim lilsom? (The element with a human face?), in "Vremia i my" (International Review of Literature and Social Problems). New York, 1993, n° 122, p. 133.
41. *M. Guerchenson*, Soudby evreïskogo naroda (The Destinies of the Jewish People), in 22, Literary and political review of the Jewish intelligentsia emigrated from the USSR to Israel, Tel-Aviv, n° 19, 1981, p. 111.
42. *Nikitin*, pp. 197–199. 202–205, 209, 216.
43. *Ibidem*, pp. 229–230.
44. *Ibidem*, pp. 232–234.
45. JE, t. 9, pp. 488–489.
46. *Nikitin*, pp. 239, 260–263. 267, 355, 358.
47. *Ibidem*, pp. 269, 277, 282, 300, 309, 329–330, 346, 358, 367, 389–391, 436–443, 467.
48. *Ibidem*, pp. 309, 314, 354–359, 364–369.
49. *Nikitin**, pp. 280–285, 307, 420–421, 434, 451, 548.
50. Orchansky, pp. 176, 182, 185, 191–192.
51. *Nikitin*, pp. 259, 280, 283, 286. 301. 304–305, 321, 402–403. 416–419, 610.
52. *Ibidem**, pp. 290, 301, 321–325, 349, 399, 408, 420–421, 475, 596.
53. *Ibidem**, p. 350–351, 382–385, 390, 425, 547, 679.

- Count Alexis Araktchev (1769–1834), a favourite of Alexander I, creator of the "military colonies" which were to house the soldiers with their families and replace the garrisons.

54. JE, 1.12, p. 695.
55. *M. Kovalevsky*, Ravnopravie evreev i ego vragui (The Equal Rights of Jews and their Enemies), in Schit: literatournyj sbornik (Literary collection), under the dir. of L. Andreyev, M. Gorky and F. Sologub, 3rd ed. increased, Moscow, Russian Society for the Study of Jewish Life, 1916, p. 117.
56. JE, t. 11, p. 494.
57. *Kovalevsky*, in Schit, p. 117.
58. *Hessen**, t. 2, pp. 50–52, 105–106.
59. JE, t. 12, p. 599.
60. *Hessen*, t. 2. pp. 47–48.

- Or "the Grottoes": a group of monasteries whose origins go back to the middle of the eleventh century and which still exist today.

61. *Ibidem*, pp. 40–42.
62. LJE, t. 7, p. 318.
63. JE, t. 14, p. 944.
64. *Ibidem*, t. 11, p. 332.
65. *Hessen*, t. 2, pp. 46, 48.
66. *Leskov*, pp. 45–48.
67. *Hessen*, t. 2, p. 49.
68. *Orchansky*, p. 30.
69. JE. t. 3, p. 359.
70. JE, t. 13. p. 646.
71. *J.M. Dijour*, Evrei v ekonomitcheskoï jizni Rossii (The Jews in Russian Economic life), in BJWR-1, pp. 164–165.
72. JE, t. 15, p. 153.
73. *Dijour*, in LJE-1, pp. 165–168.

74. *Hessen**, t. 2, p. 77.
75. JE, t. 9, pp. 689–690; *Hessen*, t. 2, p. 81.
76. *Hessen*, t. 2, p. 83.
77. *Ibidem*, p. 84; JE, t. 13. p. 47.
78. *Hessen*, t. 2. pp. 85–86.
79. *Ibidem*, pp. 84, 86–87.
80. JE, 1.13, pp. 47–48.
81. *Ibidem*, t. 3, p. 334.
82. *L Deitch*, Roi evreev v rousskom revolioutsionnom dvïjenii, (The Role of Jews in the Russian Revolutionary Movement), t. 1, 2nd ed., Moscow-Leningrad, GIZ, 1925, p. 11.
83. JE, t. 9, p. 111.
84. *Hessen*, t. 2, p. 85.
85. *Ibidem*, p. 120.

- Paul Axelrod (1850–1928), founder in Geneva of the very small group "Liberation of Labour" embryo of the future Russian Social Democratic Party, founded in 1898.

86. *Deitch*, p. 12–13.
87. *I. M. Trotsky*, The Jews in Russian Schools, in BJWR-1, pp. 351–354.
88. *Deitch*, p. 10.
89. JE, 1.11, p. 713.
90. *Hessen*, t. 11, p. 112.
91. *Ibidem*, p. 121.
92. *M. Krol*, Natsionalism i assimiliatsia v evreïskoï islorii (Nationalism and Assimilation in Jewish History), in JW, p. 188.
93. LJE, t. 4, p. 34; B. C. *Dinour*. Religiosno-natsionalnyj oblik rousskogo evreïstva (The Religious and National Profile of the Russian Jews) in BJWR-1. p. 314.
94. *Hessen*, t. 2, p. 179.
95. LJE*, 1.4, pp. 20–21.
96. *Hessen*, t. 2, pp. 89–90.
97. JE, t. 12, p. 640.
98. *Hessen*, t. 2, p. 19.
99. *Hessen*, 1.1, p. 203.
100. LJE, t. 7. p. 321.
101. *Hessen*, I. 2, pp. 107–108.
102. *Ibidem**, pp. 79–80.
103. JE, t. 13, p. 439.
104. *Hessen**, t. 2. pp. 81–82.
105. *Ibidem*, pp. 82–83.
106. *Ibidem*, pp. 100–103.
107. *Ibidem*, p.103.
108. *Dinour*, in BJWR-1. p. 319.
109. *Hessen**. t. 2. pp. 103–104.
110. *Ibidem*, pp. 107–110.
111. LJE. t. 4. p. 75.
112. JE, t. 9. p. 243.
113. *Hessen*, 1.2. p. 115.
114. LJE, t. 7, p. 323.
115. *Hessen*, t. 2, pp. 114–118.
116. *Ibidem*, p. 112.
117. JE, 1.13, p. 274.
118. *Hessen*, t. 2, p. 118.

Chapter 4: During the period of reforms

At the moment of the ascension of Alexander II to the throne, the Peasant Question in Russia had been overripe for a century and demanded immediate resolution. Then suddenly, the Jewish Question surfaced and demanded a no less urgent solution as well. In Russia, the Jewish Question was not as ancient as the deep-rooted and barbaric institution of serfdom and up to this time it did not seem to loom so large in the country. Yet henceforth, for the rest of 19th century, and right to the very year of 1917 in the State Duma, the Jewish and the Peasant questions would cross over and over again; they would contend with each other and thus become intertwined in their competing destiny.

Alexander II had taken the throne during the difficult impasse of the Crimean War against a united Europe. This situation demanded a difficult decision, whether to hold out or to surrender.

Upon his ascension, “voices were immediately raised in defense of the Jewish population.” — After several weeks, His Majesty gave orders “to make the Jews equal with the rest of population in respect to military duty, and to end acceptance of underage recruits.” (Soon after, the “skill-category” draft of Jewish philistines was cancelled; this meant that “all classes of the Jewish population were made equal with respect to compulsory military service.”[i]) This decision was confirmed in the Coronation Manifesto of 1856: “Jewish recruits of the same age and qualities which are defined for recruits from other population groups are to be admitted while acceptance of underage Jewish recruits was to be abolished.”[ii] Right then the institution of military cantonists was also completely abolished; Jewish cantonists who were younger than 20 years of age were returned to their parents even if they already had been turned into soldiers. [Cantonists were the sons of Russian conscripts who, from 1721, were educated in special "canton (garrison) schools" for future military service].

The lower ranks who had served out their full term (and their descendents) received the right to live anywhere on the territory of the Russian Empire. (They usually settled where they terminated their service. They could settle permanently and had often become the founders of new Jewish communities.[iii] In a twist of fate and as a historical punishment, Russia and the Romanov Dynasty got Yakov Sverdlov from the descendents of one such cantonist settler.[iv])

By the same manifesto the Jewish population “was forgiven all [considerable] back taxes” from previous years. (“Yet already in the course of the next five years new tax liabilities accumulated amounting to 22% of the total expected tax sum.[v])

More broadly, Alexander II expressed his intention to resolve the Jewish Question — and in the most favorable manner. For this, the approach to the question was changed drastically. If during the reign of Nicholas I the government saw its task as first reforming the Jewish

inner life, gradually clearing it out through productive work and education with consequent removal of administrative restrictions, then during the reign of Alexander II the policy was the opposite: to begin "with the intention of integrating this population with the native inhabitants of the country" as stated in the Imperial Decree of 1856.[vi] So the government had began quick removal of external constraints and restrictions not looking for possible inner causes of Jewish seclusion and morbidity; it thereby hoped that all the remaining problems would then solve themselves.

To this end, still another Committee for Arranging the Jewish Way of Life was established in 1856. (This was already the seventh committee on Jewish affairs, but by no means the last). Its chairman, the above-mentioned Count Kiselyov, reported to His Majesty that "the goal of integrating Jews with the general population" "is hindered by various temporary restrictions, which, when considered in the context of general laws, contain many contradictions and beget bewilderment." In response, His Majesty ordered "a revision of all existing statutes on Jews to harmonize them with the general strategy directed toward integration of this people with the native inhabitants, to the extent afforded by the moral condition of Jews"; that is, "the fanaticism and economic harmfulness ascribed to them."[vii]

No, not for nothing had Herzen struggled with his Kolokol, or Belinsky and Granovsky, or Gogol! (For although not having such goals, the latter acted in the same direction as the former three did.) Under the shell of the austere reign of Nicholas I, the demand for decisive reforms and the will for them and the people to implement them were building up, and, astonishingly, new projects were taken by the educated high governmental dignitaries more enthusiastically than by educated public in general. And this immediately impacted the Jewish Question. Time after time, the ministers of Internal Affairs (first Lanskoi and then Valuev) and the Governors General of the Western and Southwestern Krais [administrative divisions of Tsarist Russia] shared their suggestions with His Majesty who was quite interested in them. "Partial improvements in the legal situation of the Jews were enacted by the government on its own initiative, yet under direct supervision by His Majesty."[viii] These changes went along with the general liberating reforms which affected Jews as well as the rest of population.

In 1858, Novorossiysk Governor General Stroganov suggested immediate, instant, and complete equalization of the Jews in all rights — but the Committee, now under the chairmanship of Bludov, stopped short, finding itself unprepared for such a measure. In 1859 it pointed out, for comparison, that "while the Western-European Jews began sending their children to public schools at the first invitation of the government, more or less turning themselves to useful occupations, the Russian government has to wrestle with Jewish prejudices and fanaticism"; therefore, "making Jews equal in rights with the native inhabitants cannot happen in any other way than a gradual change, following the spread of true enlightenment among them, changes in their inner life, and turning their activity toward useful occupations."[ix]

The Committee also developed arguments against equal rights. It suggested that the question being considered was not so much a Jewish question, as it was a Russian one; that it would be precipitous to grant equal rights to Jews before raising the educational and cultural level of Russian population whose dark masses would not be able to defend themselves in the face of the economic pressure of Jewish solidarity; that the Jews hardly aspire toward integration with the rest of the citizens of the country, that they strive toward achieving all civil rights while retaining their isolation and cohesion which Russians do not possess among themselves.

However, these voices did not attain influence. One after another, restrictions had been removed. In 1859 the Prohibition of 1835 was removed: it had forbidden the Jews to take a lease or manage populated landowner's lands. (And thus, the right to rule over the peasants; though that prohibition was "in some cases … secretly violated." Although after 1861 lands remaining in the property of landowners were not formally "populated.") The new changes were aimed "to make it easier for landowners to turn for help to Jews if necessary" in case of deterioration of in the manorial economy, but also "in order to somewhat widen the restricted field of economic activity of the Jews." Now the Jews could lease these lands and settle on them though they could not buy them.[x] Meanwhile in the Southwestern Krai "capital that could be turned to the purchase of land was concentrated in the hands of some Jews … yet the Jews refused to credit landowners against security of the estate because estates could not be purchased by Jews." Soon afterwards Jews were granted the right to buy land from landowners inside the Pale of Settlement.[xi]

With development of railroads and steamships, Jewish businesses such as keeping of inns and postal stations had declined. In addition, because of new liberal customs tariffs introduced in1857 and 1868, which lowered customs duties on goods imported into Russia, "profits on contraband trade" had immediately and sharply decreased.[xii]

In 1861 the prohibition on Jews to acquire exclusive rights to some sources of revenue from estates was abolished. In the same year the systems of tax farming and 'wine farming' [translator's note: concessions from the state to private entrepreneurs to sell vodka to the populace in particular regions] were abolished. This was a huge blow to a major Jewish enterprise. "Among Jews, 'tax collector' and 'contractor' were synonyms for wealth"; now Orshansky writes, they could just dream about "the time of the Crimean War, when contractors made millions, thanks to the flexible conscience and peculiar view of the Treasury in certain circles"; "thousands of Jews lived and got rich under the beneficial wing of tax farming." Now the interests of the state had begun to be enforced and contracts had become much less profitable. And "trading in spirits" had become "far less profitable than … under … the tax farming system."[xiii] However, as the excise was introduced in the wine industry in place of the wine farming system, no special restrictions were laid on Jews and so now they could sell and rent distillation factories on a common basis in the Pale of Settlement provinces.[xiv] And they had so successfully exercised this right to rent and

purchase over next two decades that by the 1880s between 32 % and 76 % of all distillation factories in the Jewish Pale of Settlement belonged to Jews, and almost all of them fell under category of a 'major enterprise'.[xv] By 1872, 89 % of distillation factories in the Southwestern Krai were rented by Jews.[xvi] From 1863 Jews were permitted to run distillation in Western and Eastern Siberia (for "the most remarkable specialists in the distillation industry almost exclusively came from among the Jews"), and from 1865 the Jewish distillers were permitted to reside everywhere.[xvii]

Regarding the spirits trade in the villages, about one-third of the whole Jewish population of the Pale lived in villages at the start of 1880s, with two or three families in each village,[xviii] as remnants of the korchemstvo [from "tavern" — the state-regulated business of retail spirits sale]. An official government report of 1870 stated that "the drinking business in the Western Krai is almost exclusively concentrated in the hands of Jews, and the abuses encountered in these institutions exceed any bounds of tolerance."[xix] Thus it was demanded of Jews to carry on the drinking business only from their own homes. The logic of this demand was explained by G. B. Sliozberg: in the villages of Little Russia [Ukraine], that is, outside of the legal limits of the Polish autonomy, the landowners did not have the right to carry on trade in spirits — and this meant that the Jews could not buy spirits from landowners for resale. Yet at the same time the Jews might not buy even a small plot of peasant land; therefore, the Jews rented peasant homes and conducted the drinking business from them. When such trade was also prohibited — the prohibition was often evaded by using a 'front' business: a dummy patent on a spirits business was issued to a Christian to which a Jew supposedly only served as an 'attendant.'[xx]

Also, the 'punitive clause' (as it is worded in the Jewish Encyclopedia), that is, a punishment accompanying the prohibition against Jews hiring a Christian as a personal servant, was repealed in 1865 as "incompatible with the general spirit of the official policy of tolerance." And so "from the end of the 1860s many Jewish families began to hire Christian servants."[xxi]

Unfortunately, it is so typical for many scholars studying the history of Jewry in Russia to disregard hard-won victories: if yesterday all strength and attention were focused on the fight for some civil right and today that right is attained — then very quickly afterwards that victory is considered a trifle. There was so much said about the "double tax" on the Jews as though it existed for centuries and not for very few short years, and even then it was never really enforced in practice. The law of 1835, which was at the time greeted by Jews with a sense of relief, was, at the threshold of 20th century dubbed by S. Dubnov as a 'Charter of Arbitrariness.' To the future revolutionary Leo Deutsch, who in the 1860s was a young and still faithful subject, it looked like the administration "did not strictly [enforce] some essential … restrictions on … the rights" of Jews, "they turned a blind eye to … violations"; "in general, the life of Jews in Russia in the sixties was not bad…. Among my Jewish peers I did not see anyone suffering from depression, despondence, or estrangement as a result of

oppression" by their Christian mates.[xxii] But then he suddenly recollects his revolutionary duty and calls everything given to the Jews during the reign of Alexander I as, "in essence, insignificant alleviations" and, without losing a beat, mentions "the crimes of Alexander II" — although, in his opinion, the Tsar shouldn't have been killed.[xxiii] And from the middle of the 20th century it already looks like for the whole of 19th century that various committees and commissions were being created for review of Jewish legal restrictions "and they came to the conclusion that the existing legal restrictions did not achieve their aims and should be … abolished…. Yet not a single one of the projects worked out by the Committees … was implemented."[xxiv]

It's rid of, forgotten, and no toasts made.

After the first Jewish reforms by Alexander II, the existence of the Pale of Settlement had become the most painful issue. "Once a hope about a possibility of future state reforms had emerged, and first harbingers of expected renewal of public life had barely appeared, the Jewish intelligentsia began contemplating the daring step of raising the question of abolishing the Jewish Pale of Settlement altogether."[xxv] Yet still fresh in the Jewish memory was the idea of 'selectivity': to impose additional obligations on not-permanently-settled and unproductive Jews. And so in 1856 an idea to petition His Majesty appeared in the social strata of "Jewish merchants, citizens of St. Petersburg, and out-of-towners," who "by their social standing and by the nature of their activity, more closely interacted with the central authorities."[xxvi] The petition asked His Majesty "not to give privileges to the whole Jewish population, but only to certain categories," to the young generation "raised in the spirit and under the supervision of the government," "to the upper merchant class," and "to the good craftsmen, who earn their bread by sweat of their brow"; so that they would be "distinguished by the government with more rights than those who still exhibited nothing special about their good intentions, usefulness, and industriousness…. Our petition is so that the Merciful Monarch, distinguishing wheat from chaff, would be kindly disposed to grant several, however modest privileges to the worthy and cultivated among us, thus encouraging good and praiseworthy actions."[xxvii] (Even in all their excited hopes they could not even imagine how quickly the changes in the position of the Jews would be implemented in practice —already in 1862 some of the authors of this petition would ask "about extending equal rights to all who graduate from secondary educational institutions," for the grammar school graduates "of course, must be considered people with a European education."[xxviii]

And yes, "in principle, the Tsar did not mind violations of the laws concerning the Jewish Pale of Settlement in favor of individual groups of the Jewish population." In 1859 Jewish merchants of the 1st Guild were granted the right of residency in all of Russia (and the 2nd Guild in Kiev from 1861; and also for all three guilds in Nikolayev, Sevastopol, and Yalta)[xxix] with the right of arranging manufacturing businesses, contracts, and acquiring real estate. Earlier, doctors and holders of masters degrees in science had already enjoyed the right of

universal residency (including the right to occupy posts in government service; here we should note a professor of medicine G.A. Zakharyin, who in the future would pronounce the fatal judgment about the illness of Alexander III). From 1861 this right was granted to "candidates of universities," that is, simply to university graduates,[xxx] and also "to persons of free professions."[xxxi] The Pale of Settlement restrictions were now lifted even from the "persons, desiring to obtain higher education … namely to persons, entering medical academies, universities, and technical institutes."[xxxii] Then, as a result of petitions from individual ministers, governors, and influential Jewish merchants (e.g., Evzel Ginzburg), from 1865 the whole territory of Russia including St. Petersburg was opened to Jewish artisans, though only for the period of actual professional activity. (The notion of artisans was then widened to include all kinds of technicians such as typesetters and typographic workers.)[xxxiii]

Here it is worth keeping in mind that merchants relocated with their clerks, office workers, various assistants, and Jewish service personnel, craftsmen, and also with apprentices and pupils. Taken altogether, this already made up a notable stream. Thus, a Jew with a right of residency outside of the Pale was free to move from the Pale, and not only with his family.

Yet new relaxations were outpaced by new petitions. In 1861, immediately after granting privileges for the "candidates of universities," the Governor General of the Southwestern Krai had asked to allow exit from the Pale to those who completed state professional schools for the Jews, that is, incomplete high school-level establishments. He had vividly described the condition of such graduates: "Young people graduating from such schools find themselves completely cut off from Jewish society…. If they do not find occupations according to their qualifications within their own circles, they get accustomed to idleness and thus, by being unworthy representatives of their profession, they often discredit the prestige of education in the eyes of people they live among."[xxxiv]

In that same year, the Ministers of Internal Affairs and Education declared in unison "that a paramount cause of the disastrous condition of Jews is hidden in the abnormal share of Jews occupied in commerce and industry versus the rest engaged in agriculture"; and because of this "the peasant is unavoidably preyed upon by Jews as if he is obligated to surrender a part of his income to their maintenance." Yet the internal competition between the Jews creates a "nearly impossible situation of providing for themselves by legal means." And therefore, it is necessary to "grant the right of universal residence to merchants" of the 2nd and 3rd Guilds, and also to graduates of high or equivalent schools.[xxxv]

In 1862 the Novorossiysk Governor General again called for "complete abolition of the Jewish Pale of Settlement" by asking "to grant the right of universal residency to the entire [Jewish] people."[xxxvi]

Targeted permissions for universal residency of certain Jewish groups were being issued at a slower but constant rate. From 1865 acceptance of Jews as military doctors was permitted,

and right after that (1866-1867), Jewish doctors were allowed to work in the ministries of Education and Interior.[xxxvii] From 1879 they were permitted to serve as pharmacists and veterinarians; permission was also granted "to those preparing for the corresponding type of activity,"[xxxviii] and also to midwives and feldshers, and "those desiring to study medical assistant arts."[xxxix]

Finally, a decree by the Minister of Internal Affairs Makov was issued allowing residence outside the Pale to all those Jews who had already illegally settled there.[xl]

Here it is appropriate to add that in the 1860s "Jewish lawyers … in the absence of the official Bar College during that period were able to get jobs in government service without any difficulties."[xli]

Relaxations had also affected the Jews living in border regions. In 1856, when, according to the Treaty of Paris, the Russian state boundary retreated close to Kishinev and Akkerman, the Jews were not forced out of this newly-formed frontier zone. And in 1858 "the decrees of Nicholas I, which directed Jews to abandon the fifty versts [an obsolete Russian measure, a verst is slightly more than a kilometer] boundary zone, were conclusively repealed."[xlii] And from 1868 movement of Jews between the western provinces of Russia and Polish Kingdom was allowed (where previously it was formally prohibited).[xliii]

Alongside official relaxations to the legal restrictions, there were also exceptions and loopholes in regulations. For example, in the capital city of St. Petersburg "despite … prohibitions, the Jews all the same settled in for extended times"; and "with the ascension of Alexander II … the number of Jews in St. Petersburg began to grow quickly. Jewish capitalists emerged who began dedicating significant attention to the organization of the Jewish community" there; "Baron Goratsy Ginzburg, for example … L. Rozental, A Varshavsky, and others."[xliv] Toward the end of Alexander II's reign, E. A. Peretz (the son of the tax farmer Abram Peretz) became the Russian Secretary of State. In the 1860s "St. Petersburg started to attract quite a few members of the commercial, industrial and intellectual [circles] of Jewry."[xlv]

According to the data of the Commission for Arranging the Jewish Way of Life, in 1880-81, 6,290 Jews were officially registered in St. Petersburg,[xlvi] while according to other official figures, 8,993; and according to a local census from 1881, there were 16,826 Jews in St. Petersburg, i.e., around 2% of the total city population.[xlvii]

In Moscow in 1856 the obligation of arriving Jewish merchants to exclusively reside in the Glebovsky Quarter was repealed; "the Jews were allowed to stay in any part of the city. During the reign of Alexander II … the Jewish population of Moscow grew quickly"; by 1880 it was around 16,000."[xlviii]

It was a similar situation in Kiev. After 1861, "a quick growth of the Jewish population of Kiev had began" (from 1,500 in 1862, to 81,000 by 1913). From the 1880s there was an influx of

Jews to Kiev. “Despite frequent police round-ups, which Kiev was famous for, the numbers of Jews there considerably exceeded the official figures…. By the end of the 19th century, the Jews accounted for 44% of Kiev merchants.”[xlix]

Yu. I. Hessen calls “the granting of the right of universal residency (1865) to artisans” most important. Yet Jews apparently did not hurry to move out of the Pale. Well, if it was so overcrowded in there, so constraining, and so deprived with respect to markets and earnings, why then did they make “almost no use of the right to leave the Pale of Settlement?” By 1881, in thirty-one of the interior provinces, Jewish artisans numbered 28,000 altogether (and Jews in general numbered 34,000). Hessen explains this paradox in the following way: prosperous artisans did not need to seek new places while the destitute did not have the means for the move, and the middle group, “which somehow managed from day to day without enduring any particular poverty,” feared that after their departure the elders of their community would refuse to extend an annual passport to them for tax considerations, or even “demand that the outgoing parties return home.”[l]

But one can strongly doubt all this statistics. We have just read that in St. Petersburg alone there were at least twice as many Jews than according to official data. Could the slow Russian state apparatus really account for the mercury-quick Jewish population within a definite time and in all places?

And the growth of Jewish population of Russia was rapid and confident. In 1864 it amounted to 1,500,000 without counting Jews in Poland.[li] And together with Poland in 1850 it was 2,350,000; and in 1860 it was already 3,980,000. From the initial population of around 1,000,000 at the time of the first partitions of Poland, to 5,175,000 by the census of 1897 — that is, after a century, it grew more than five times. (At the start of the 19th century Russian Jewry amounted to 30% of the world’s Jewish population, while in 1880 it was already 51%).[lii]

This was a major historical event.At the time, its significance was grasped neither by Russian society, nor by Russian administration.

This fast numerical growth alone, without all other peculiarities of the Jewish Question, had already put a huge state problem for Russia. And here it is necessary, as always in any question, to try to understand both points of view. With such an enormous growth of Russian Jewry, two national needs were clashing ever more strongly. On one hand was the need of Jews (and a distinct feature of their dynamic 3,000-year existence) to spread and settle as wide as possible among non-Jews, so that a greater number of Jews would be able to engage in manufacturing, commerce, and serve as intermediaries (and to get involved into the culture of the surrounding population). On the other was the need of Russians, as the government understood it, to have control over their economic (and then cultural) life, and develop it themselves at their own pace.

Let's not forget that simultaneously with all these relief measures for the Jews, the universal liberating reforms of Alexander II were implemented one after another, and so benefiting Jews as well as all other peoples of Russia. For example, in 1863 the capitation [i.e., poll or head] tax from the urban population was repealed, which meant the tax relief for the main part of Jewish masses; only land taxes remained after that, which were paid from the collected kosher tax.[liii]

Yet precisely the most important of these Alexandrian reforms, the most historically significant turning point in the Russian history — the liberation of peasants and the abolition of the Serfdom in 1861 — turned out to be highly unprofitable for Russian Jews, and indeed ruinous for many. "The general social and economic changes resulting from the abolition of peasant servitude … had significantly worsened the material situation of broad Jewish masses during that transitional period."[liv] The social change was such that the multi-million disenfranchised and immobile peasant class ceased to exist, reducing the relative advantage of Jewish personal freedom. And the economic change was such that "the peasant, liberated from the servitude, … was less in the need of services by the Jew"; that is, the peasant was now at liberty from the strict prohibition against trading his products and purchasing goods himself — that is, through anyone other than a pre-assigned middleman (in the western provinces, almost always a Jew). And now, as the landowners were deprived of free serf labor, in order not to be ruined, "they were compelled to get personally engaged in the economy of their estates — an occupation where earlier Jews played a conspicuous role as renters and middlemen in all kinds of commercial and manufacturing deals."[lv]

It's noteworthy that the land credit introduced in those years was displacing the Jew "as the financial manager of the manorial economy."[lvi] The development of consumer and credit associations led to "the liberation of people from the tyranny of usury."[lvii]

An intelligent contemporary conveys to us the Jewish mood of the time. Although access to government service and free professions was open to the Jews and although "the industrial rights of the Jews were broadened" and there were "more opportunities for education" and "on every … corner" the "rapprochement between the Jewish and Christian populations was visible" and although the remaining "restrictions … were far from being strictly enforced" and "the officials now treated the Jewish population with far more respect than before," yet the situation of Jews in Russia "at the present time … is very dismal." "Not without reason," Jews "express regret … for good old times." Everywhere in the Pale of Settlement one could hear "the Jewish lamentations about the past." For under serfdom an "extraordinary development of mediation" took place; the lazy landowner could not take a step without the "Jewish trader or agent," and the browbeaten peasant also could not manage without him; he could only sell the harvest through him, and borrowed from him also. Before, the Jewish business class "derived enormous benefit from the helplessness, wastefulness, and impracticality of landowners," but now the landowner had to do everything himself. Also, the peasant became "less pliant and timid"; now he often establishes contacts with

wholesale traders himself and he drinks less; and this "naturally has a harmful effect on the trade in spirits, which an enormous number of Jews lives on." The author concludes with the wish that the Jews, as happened in Europe, "would side with the productive classes and would not become redundant in the national economy."[lviii]

Now Jews had begun renting and purchasing land. The Novorossiysk Governor General (1869) requested in a staff report to forbid Jews in his region to buy land as was already prohibited in nine western provinces. Then in 1872 there was a memorandum by the Governor General of the Southwestern Krai stating that "Jews rent land not for agricultural occupations but only for industrial aims; they hand over the rented land to peasants, not for money but for a certain amount of work, which exceeds the value of the usual rent on that land, and thereby they "establish a sort of their own form of servitude." And though "they undoubtedly reinvigorate the countryside with their capital and commerce," the Governor General "considered concentration of manufacture and agriculture in the same hands un-conducive, since only under free competition can peasant farms and businesses avoid the "burdensome subordination of their work and land to Jewish capital, which is tantamount to their inevitable and impending material and moral perdition." However, thinking to limit the renting of land to Jews in his Krai, he proposed to "give the Jews an opportunity to settle in all of the Greater Russian provinces."[lix]

The memorandum was put forward to the just-created Commission for Arranging the Jewish Way of Life (the eighth of the 'Jewish Commissions', according to count), which was then highly sympathetic to the situation of the Jews. It received a negative review which was later confirmed by the government: to forbid the Jewish rent of land would be "a complete violation of rights" of … landowners. Moreover, the interests of the major Jewish renter "merge completely with those of other landowners…. Well, it is true, that the Jewish proletarians group around the major [Jewish] renters and live off the work and means of the rural population. But the same also happens in the estates managed by the landowners themselves who to this time cannot manage without the help of the Jews."[lx]

However, in the areas inhabited by the Don Cossacks, the energetic economic advancement of the Jews was restricted by the prohibition of 1880 to own or rent the real estate. The provincial government found that "in view of the exclusive situation of the Don Province, the Cossack population which is obligated to military service to a man, [this] is the only reliable way to save the Cossack economy from ruin, to secure the nascent manufacturing and commerce in the area." For "a too hasty exploitation of a region's wealth and quick development of industry … are usually accompanied by an extremely uneven distribution of capital, and the swift enrichment of some and the impoverishment of others. Meanwhile, the Cossacks must prosper, since they carry out their military service on their own horses and with their own equipment."[lxi] And thus they had prevented a possible Cossack explosion.

So what happened with the conscription of Jews into military service after all those Alexandrian relief measures of 1856? For the 1860s, this was the picture: "When Jews manage to find out about the impending Imperial Manifest about recruit enrollment before it is officially published … all members of Jewish families fit for military service flee from their homes in all directions…." Because of the peculiarities of their faith and "lack of comradeship and the perpetual isolation of the Jewish soldier … the military service for the Jews was the most threatening, the most ruinous, and the most burdensome of duties."[lxii] Although from 1860 the Jewish service in the Guards was permitted, and from 1861promotions to petty officer ranks and service as clerks,[lxiii] there was still no access to officer ranks.

I. G. Orshansky, a witness to the 1860s, certifies: "It is true, there is much data supporting the opinion that in the recent years the Jews in fact had not fulfilled their conscription obligations number-wise. They purchase old recruit discharges and present them to the authorities"; peasants sometimes keep them without knowing their value as far back as from 1812; so now Jewish resourcefulness puts them to use. Or, they "hire volunteers" in place of themselves and "pay a certain sum to the treasury." "Also they try to divide their families into smaller units," and by this each family claims the privilege of "the only son," (the only son was exempt from the military service). Yet, he notes "all the tricks for avoiding recruitment … are similarly encountered among the 'pure-blooded' Russians" and provides comparative figures for Ekaterinoslav Guberniya. I. G. Orshansky had even expressed surprise that Russian peasants prefer "to return to the favorite occupation of the Russian people, farming," instead of wanting to remain in the highly-paid military service.[lxiv]

In 1874 a unified regulation about universal military service had replaced the old recruit conscription obligation giving the Jews a "significant relief." "The text of the regulation did not contain any articles that discriminated against Jews."[lxv] However, now Jews were not permitted to remain in residence in the interior provinces after completion of military service. Also, special regulations aimed "to specify the figure of male Jewish population" were introduced, for to that day it largely remained undetermined and unaccounted." Information about abuses of law by Jews wishing to evade military service[KM1] "[lxvi] was circulated to governors. In 1876 the first "measures for ensuring the proper fulfillment of military duty by Jews"[lxvii] were adopted. The Jewish Encyclopedia saw "a heavy net of repressive measures" in them. "Regulations were issued about the registration of Jews at conscription districts and about the replacement of Jews not fit for service by Jews who were fit"; and about verification of the validity of exemptions for family conditions: for violation of these regulations "conscription … of only sons was permitted."[lxviii]

A contemporary and then influential St. Petersburg newspaper, Golos [The Voice] cites quite amazing figures from the official governmental "Report on the Results of Conscription in 1880…. For all [of the Russian Empire] the shortfall of recruits was 3,309; out of this, the shortfall of Jews was 3,054, which amounts to 92%."[lxix]

Shmakov, a prominent attorney, not well-disposed toward Jews, cites such statistics from the reference, Pravitelstvenniy Vestnik [The Government Bulletin]: for the period 1876-1883: "out of 282,466 Jews subject to conscription, 89,105 — that is, 31.6% — did not show up." (The general shortfall for the whole Empire was 0.19%.) The Administration could not help but notice this, and a number of "steps toward the elimination of such abuse" were introduced. This had an effect, but only short-term. In 1889 46,190 Jews were subjected to call-up, and 4,255 did not appear, that is 9.2%. But in 1891 "from a general number of 51,248 Jews recorded on the draft list, 7,658, or 14.94%, failed to report; at that time the percentage of Christians not reporting was barely 2.67%. In 1892, 16.38% of Jews failed to report as compared with 3.18% of Christians. In 1894 6,289 Jews did not report for the draft, that is, 13.6%. Compare this to the Russian average of 2.6%.[lxx]

However, the same document on the 1894 draft states that "in total, 873,143 Christians, 45,801 Jews, 27,424 Mohammedans, and 1,311 Pagans" were to be drafted. These are striking figures — in Russia, there were 8.7% Muslims (according to the 1870 count) but their share in the draft was only 2.9%! The Jews were in an unfavorable position not only in comparison with the Mohammedans but with the general population too: their share of the draft was assigned 4.8% though they constituted only 3.2% of Russian population (in 1870). (The Christian share in the draft was 92% (87% of Russian population).[lxxi]

From everything said here one should not conclude that at the time of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, Jewish soldiers did not display courage and resourcefulness during combat. In the journal Russkiy Evrei [The Russian Jew] we can find convincing examples of both virtues.[lxxii] Yet during that war much irritation against Jews arose in the army, mainly because of dishonest contractor-quartermasters — and "such were almost exclusively Jews, starting with the main contractors of the Horovits, Greger, and Kagan Company."[lxxiii] The quartermasters supplied (undoubtedly under protection of higher circles) overpriced poor-quality equipment including the famous "cardboard soles", due to which the feet of Russian soldiers fighting in the Shipka Pass were frostbitten.

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In the Age of Alexander II, the half-century-old official drive to accustom the Jews to agriculture was ending in failure.

After the repeal of disproportionate Jewish recruitment, farming had "immediately lost all its appeal" for Jews, or, in words of one government official, a "false interpretation of the Manifest by them" had occurred, "according to which they now considered themselves free of the obligation to engage in farming," and that they could now migrate freely. "The

petitions from the Jews about resettling with the intent to work in agriculture had ended almost completely."[lxxiv]

Conditions in the existing colonies remained the same if not worse: "fields … were plowed and sowed pathetically, just for a laugh, or for appearance's sake only." For instance, in 1859 "the grain yield in several colonies was even smaller than the amount sown." In the new 'paradigmatic' colonies, not only barns were lacking, there was even no overhangs or pens for livestock. The Jewish colonists leased most of their land to others, to local peasants or German colonists. Many asked permission to hire Christians as workers, otherwise threatening to cut back on sowing even further — and they were granted such a right, regardless of the size of the actual crop.[lxxv]

Of course, there were affluent Jewish farmers among the colonists. Arrival of German colonists was very helpful too as their experience could now be adopted by Jews. And the young generation born there was already more accepting toward agriculture and German experience; they were more "convinced in the advantageousness of farming in comparison to their previous life in the congestion and exasperating competition of shtetls and towns."[lxxvi]

Yet the incomparably larger majority was trying to get away from agriculture. Gradually, inspectors' reports became invariably monotonic: "What strikes most is the general Jewish dislike for farm work and their regrets about their former artisan occupations, trade, and business"; they displayed "tireless zeal in any business opportunity," for example, "at the very high point of field work … they could leave the fields if they discovered that they could profitably buy or sell a horse, an ox, or something else, in the vicinity." [They had] a predilection for penny-wise trade," demanding, according to their "conviction, less work and giving more means for living." "Making money was easier for Jews in nearby German, Russian, or Greek villages, where the Jewish colonist would engage in tavern-keeping and small trade." Yet more damaging for the arable land were long absences of the workers who left the area for distant places, leaving only one or two family members at home in the colonies, while the rest went to earn money in brokerages. In the 1860s (a half-century after the founding of colonies) such departure was permitted for the entire families or many family members simultaneously; in the colonies quite a few people were listed who had never lived there. After leaving the colonies, they often evaded registering with their trade guild in the new place, and "many stayed there for several consecutive years, with family, unregistered to any guild, and thus not subject to any kind of tax or obligation." And in the colonies, the houses built for them stood empty, and fell into disrepair. In 1861, Jews were permitted to maintain drinking houses in the colonies.[lxxvii]

Finally, the situation regarding Jewish agriculture had dawned on the St. Petersburg authorities in all its stark and dismal reality. Back taxes (forgiven on numerous occasions, such as an imperial marriage) grew, and each amnesty had encouraged Jews not to pay taxes or repay loans from now on. (In 1857, when the ten years granted to collect past due taxes

had expired, five additional years were added. But even in 1863 the debt was still not collected.) So what was all that resettling, privileges and loans for? On the one hand, the whole 60-year epic project had temporarily provided Jews with means "of avoiding their duties before the state" while at the same time failing to instill love for agriculture among the colonists." "The ends were not worthy of the means." On the other hand, "simply a permission to live outside of the Pale, even without any privileges, attracted a huge number of Jewish farmers" who stopped at nothing to get there.[lxxviii]

If in 1858 there were officially 64,000 Jewish colonists, that is, eight to ten thousand families, then by 1880 the Ministry had found only 14,000, that is, less than two thousand families.[lxxix] For example, in the whole Southwestern Krai in 1872 the commission responsible for verifying whether or not the land is in use or lay unattended had found fewer than 800 families of Jewish colonists.[lxxx]

Russian authorities had clearly seen now that the entire affair of turning Jews into farmers had failed. They no longer believed that "their cherished hope for the prosperity of colonies could be realized." It was particularly difficult for the Minister Kiselyov to part with this dream, but he retired in 1856. Official documents admitted failure, one after another: "resettlement of the Jews for agricultural occupation 'has not been accompanied by favorable results'." Meanwhile "enormous areas of rich productive black topsoil remain in the hands of the Jews unexploited." After all, the best soil was selected and reserved for Jewish colonization. That portion, which was temporarily rented to those willing, gave a large income (Jewish colonies lived off it) as the population in the South grew and everyone asked for land. And now even the worst land from the reserve, beyond that allotted for Jewish colonization, had also quickly risen in value.[lxxxi] The Novorossiysk Krai had already absorbed many active settlers and "no longer needed any state-promoted colonization."[lxxxii]

So the Jewish colonization had become irrelevant for state purposes.

And in 1866 Alexander II had ordered and end to the enforcement of several laws aimed at turning Jews into farmers. Now the task was to equalize Jewish farmers with the rest of the farmers of the Empire. Everywhere, Jewish colonies turned out to be incapable of independent existence in the new free situation. So now it was necessary to provide legal means for Jews to abandon agriculture, even individually and not in whole families (1868), so they could become artisans and merchants. They had been permitted to redeem their parcels of land; and so they redeemed and resold their land at a profit.[lxxxiii]

However, in the dispute over various projects in the Ministry of State Property, the question about the reform of Jewish colonies dragged out and even stopped altogether by 1880. In the meantime with a new recruit statute of 1874, Jews were stripped of their recruiting privileges, and with that any vestiges of their interest in farming were conclusively lost. By 1881 "in the colonies 'there was a preponderance of farmsteads with only one apartment

house, around which there were no signs of settlement; that is, no fence, no housing for livestock, no farm buildings, no beds for vegetables, nor even a single tree or shrub; there were very few exceptions.'"[lxxxiv]

The state councilor Ivashintsev, an official with 40 years experience in agriculture, was sent in 1880 to investigate the situation with the colonies. He had reported that in all of Russia "no other peasant community enjoyed such generous benefits as had been given [to Jews]" and "these benefits were not a secret from other peasants, and could not help but arouse hostile feelings in them." Peasants adjacent to the Jewish colonies "'were indignant … because due to a shortage of land they had to rent the land from Jews for an expensive price, the land which was given cheaply to the Jews by the state in amounts in fact exceeding the actual Jewish needs.' It was namely this circumstance which in part explained … 'the hostility of peasants toward Jewish farmers, which manifested itself in the destruction of several Jewish settlements'" (in 1881-82).[lxxxv]

In those years, there were commissions allotting land to peasants from the excess land of the Jewish settlements. Unused or neglected sectors were taken back by the government. "In Volynsk, Podolsk, and Kiev guberniyas, out of 39,000 desyatins [one desyatin = 2.7 acres] only 4,082 remained [under Jewish cultivation]."[lxxxvi] Yet several quite extensive Jewish farming settlements remained: Yakshitsa in the Minsk Guberniya, not known for its rich land, had 740 desyatins for 46 [Jewish] families;[lxxxvii] that is, an average of 16 desyatins per family, something you will rarely find among peasants in Central Russia; in 1848 in Annengof of Mogilyov Guberniya, also not vast in land, twenty Jewish families received 20 desyatins of state land each, but by 1872 it was discovered that there were only ten families remaining, and a large part of the land was not cultivated and was choked with weeds.[lxxxviii] In Vishenki of Mogilyov Guberniya, they had 16 desyatins per family;[lxxxix] and in Ordynovshchina of Grodno Guberniya 12 desyatins per [Jewish] family. In the more spacious southern guberniyas in the original settlements there remained: 17 desyatins per [Jewish] family in Bolshoi Nagartav; 16 desyatins per [Jewish] family in Seidemenukh; and 17 desyatins per family in Novo-Berislav. In the settlement of Roskoshnaya in Ekaterinoslav Guberniya they had 15 desyatins per family, but if total colony land is considered, then 42 desyatins per family.[xc] In Veselaya (by 1897) there were 28 desyatins per family. In Sagaidak, there were 9 desyatins, which was considered a small allotment.[xci] And in Kiev Province's Elyuvka, there were 6 Jewish families with 400 desyatins among them, or 67 desyatins per family! And land was rented to the Germans."[xcii]

Yet from a Soviet author of the 1920s we read a categorical statement that "Tsarism had almost completely forbidden the Jews to engage in agriculture."[xciii]

On the pages which summarize his painstaking work, the researcher of Jewish agriculture V. N. Nikitin concludes: "The reproaches against the Jews for having poor diligence in farming, for leaving without official permission for the cities to engage in commercial and artisan occupations, are entirely justified ….We by no means deny the Jewish responsibility for such

a small number of them actually working in agriculture after the last 80 years." Yet he puts forward several excuses for them: "[The authorities] had no faith in Jews; the rules of the colonization were changed repeatedly"; sometimes "officials who knew nothing about agriculture or who were completely indifferent to Jews were sent to regulate their lives…. Jews who used to be independent city dwellers were transformed into villagers without any preparation for life in the country."[xciv]

At around the same time, in 1884, N. S. Leskov, in a memorandum intended for yet another governmental commission on Jewish affairs headed by Palen, had suggested that the Jewish "lack of habituation to agricultural living had developed over generations" and that it is "so strong, that it is equal to the loss of ability in farming," and that the Jew would not become a plowman again unless the habit is revived gradually.[xcv]

(Lev Tolstoy had allegedly pondered: who are those "confining the entire nation to the squeeze of city life, and not giving it a chance to settle on the land and begin to do the only natural man's occupation, farming. After all, it's the same as not to give the people air to breathe. … What's wrong with … Jews settling in villages and starting to live a pure working life, which, probably, this ancient, intelligent, and wonderful people has already yearned for?…"[xcvi] — On what planet was he living? What did he know about the 80 years of practical experience with [Jewish] agricultural colonization?)

And yet the experience of the development of Palestine where the Jewish settlers felt themselves at home had showed their excellent ability to work the land; moreover, they did it in conditions much more unfavorable than in Novorossiya. Still, all the attempts to persuade or compel the Jews toward arable farming in Russia (and afterwards in the USSR) had failed (and from that came the degrading legend that the Jews in general are incapable of farming).

And thus, after 80 years of effort by the Russian government it turned out that all that agricultural colonization was a grandiose but empty affair; all the effort, all the massive expenditures, the delay of the development of Novorossiya — all were for nothing. The resulting experience shows that it shouldn't have been undertaken at all.

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Generally examining Jewish commercial and industrial entrepreneurship, I. G. Orshansky justly wrote at the start of the 1870s that the question about Jewish business activity is "the essence of the Jewish Question," on which "fate of Jewish people in any country depends." "[An entrepreneur] from the quick, mercantile, resourceful Jewish tribe" turns over a ruble five times "while a Russian turns it two times." There is stagnation, drowsiness, and

monopoly among the Russian merchants. (For example, after the expulsion of the Jews from Kiev, life there had become more expensive). The strong side of Jewish participation in commercial life lies in the acceleration of capital turnover, even of the most insignificant working capital. Debunking the opinion, that so-called Jewish corporate spirit gives them a crucial advantage in any competition, that "Jewish [merchants] always support each other, having their bankers, contractors, and carriers," Orshansky attributed the Jewish corporate spirit only to social and religious matters, and not to commerce, where, he claimed, Jews fiercely compete against each other (which is in contradiction with the Hazaka prescribing separation of spheres of activity, which, according to him, "had gradually disappeared following the change in legal standing of Jews"[xcvii]). He had also contested the opinion that any Jewish trade does not enrich the country, that "it exclusively consists of exploitation of the productive and working classes," and that "the profit of the Jews is a pure loss for the nation." He disagreed, suggesting that Jews constantly look for and find new sales markets and thereby "open new sources of earnings for the poor Christian population as well."[xcviii]

Jewish commercial and industrial entrepreneurship in Russia had quickly recovered from the two noticeable blows of 1861, the abolition of serfdom and the abolition of wine farming. "The financial role of Jews had become particularly significant by the 1860s, when previous activities amassed capital in their hands, while liberation of peasants and the associated impoverishment of landowners created a huge demand for money on the part of landowners statewide. Jewish capitalists played a prominent role in organization of land banks."[xcix] The whole economic life of the country quickly changed in many directions and the invariable Jewish determination, inventiveness, and capital were keeping pace with the changes and were even ahead of them. Jewish capital flowed, for example, to the sugar industry of the Southwest (so that in 1872 one fourth of all sugar factories had a Jewish owner, as well as one third of joint-stock sugar companies),[c] and to the flour-milling and other factory industries both in the Pale of Settlement and outside. After the Crimean War "an intensive construction of railroads" was underway; "all kinds of industrial and commercial enterprises, joint stock companies and banks arose" and "many Jews … found wide application for their strengths and talents in those undertakings … with a few of them getting very rich incredibly fast."[ci]

"Jews were involved in the grain business for a long time but their role had become particularly significant after the peasant liberation and from the beginning of large-scale railroad construction." "Already in 1878, 60% of grain export was in the hands of Jews and afterwards it was almost completely controlled by Jews." And "thanks to Jewish industrialists, lumber had become the second most important article of Russian export (after grain)." Woodcutting contracts and the acquisition of forest estates by Jews were not prohibited since 1835. "The lumber industry and timber trade were developed by Jews. Also, Jews had established timber export." "The timber trade is a major aspect of Jewish commerce, and, at the same time, a major area of concentration of capital…. Intensive growth of the Jewish timber trade began in the 1860-1870s, when as a result of the abolition of serfdom,

landowners unloaded a great number of estates and forests on the market." "The 1870s were the years of the first massive surge of Jews into industries" such as manufacturing, flax, foodstuff, leather, cabinetry, and furniture industries, while "tobacco industry had long since been concentrated in the hands of Jews."[cii]

In the words of Jewish authors: "In the epoch of Alexander II, the wealthy Jewish bourgeoisie was … completely loyal … to the monarchy. The great wealth of the Gintsburgs, the Polyakovs, the Brodskys, the Zaitsevs, the Balakhovskys, and the Ashkenazis was amassed exactly at that time." As already mentioned, "the tax-farmer Evzel Gintsburg had founded his own bank in St. Petersburg." Samuil Polyakov had built six railroad lines; the three Polyakov brothers were granted hereditary nobility titles.[ciii] "Thanks to railroad construction, which was guaranteed and to a large extent subsidized by the government, the prominent capital of the Polyakovs, I. Bliokh, A. Varshavsky and others were created." Needless to say, many more smaller fortunes were made as well, such as that of A. I. Zaks, the former assistant to E. Gintsburg in tax-farming, who had moved to St. Petersburg and created the Savings and Loan Bank there; "he arranged jobs for his and his wife's many relatives at the enterprises he was in charge of."[civ]

Not just the economy, the entire public life had been transformed in the course of Alexandrian reforms, opening new opportunities for mercurial Jewry. "In the government resolutions permitting certain groups of Jews with higher education to enter government service, there was no restriction in regard to movement up the job ladder. With the attainment of the Full State Advisor rank, a Jew could be elevated to the status of hereditary nobility on common grounds."[cv]

In 1864 the land reform began. It "affected all social classes and strata. Its statute … did not in any way restrict the eligibility of Jews to vote in country administrative elections or occupy elected country offices. In the course of twenty-six years of the statute being in effect, Jews could be seen in many places among town councilors and in the municipal executive councils."[cvi]

Similarly, the judicial statutes of 1864 stipulated no restrictions for Jews. As a result of the judicial reform, an independent judicial authority was created, and in place of private mediators the legal bar guild was established as an independent class with a special corporate structure (and notably, even with the un-appealable right to refuse legal assistance to an applicant "on the basis of moral evaluation of his person," including evaluation of his political views). And there were no restrictions on Jews entering this class. Gessen wrote: "Apart from the legal profession, in which Jews had come to prominence, we begin noticing them in court registries among investigative officials and in the ranks of public prosecutors; in some places we already see Jews in the magistrate and district court offices"; they also served as jurors"[cvii] without any quota restrictions (during the first decades after the reform). (Remarkably, during civil trials the Jews were taking conventional juror's oath without any provision made for the Jewish religion).

At the same time municipal reform was being implemented. Initially it was proposed to restrict Jewish representation among town councilors and in the municipal executive councils by fifty percent, but because of objections by the Minister of Internal Affairs, the City Statute of 1870 had reduced the maximal share to one third; further, Jews were forbidden from occupying the post of mayor.[cviii] It was feared "that otherwise Jewish internal cohesion and self-segregation would allow them to obtain a leading role in town institutions and give them an advantage in resolution of public issues."[cix] On the other hand, Jews were equalized in electoral rights (earlier they could vote only as a faction), which led to "the increased influence of Jews in all city governing matters (though in the free city of Odessa these rules were in place from the very beginning; later, it was adopted in Kishinev too. "Generally speaking, in the south of Russia the social atmosphere was not permeated by contempt toward Jews, unlike in Poland where it was diligently cultivated."[cx])

Thus "perhaps … the best period in Russian history for Jews" went on. "An access to civil service was opened for Jews…. The easing of legal restrictions and the general atmosphere of 'the Age of Great Reforms' had affected the spirit of the Jewish people beneficially."[cxi] It appeared that under the influence of the Age of Great Reforms "the traditional daily life of the Jewish populace had turned toward the surrounding world" and that Jewry "had begun participating as far as possible in the struggle for rights and liberty…. There was not a single area in the economic, public and spiritual life of Russia unaffected by the creative energies of Russian Jews."[cxii]

And remember that from the beginning of the century the doors of Russian general education were opened wide for Jews, though it took a long time for the unwilling Jews to enter.

Later, a well-known lawyer and public figure, Ya. L. Teytel thus recalled the Mozyr grammar school of the 1860s: "The director of the school … often … appealed to the Jews of Mozyr, telling them about the benefits of education and about the desire of government to see more Jews in grammar schools. Unfortunately, such pleas had fallen on deaf ears."[cxiii] So they were not enthusiastic to enroll during the first years after the reform, even when they were offered free education paid for by state and when school charters (1864) declared that schools are open to everyone regardless confession.[cxiv] "The Ministry of National Education … tried to make admission of Jews into general education institutions easier"; it exhibited "benevolence toward young Jewish students."[cxv] (Here L. Deutsch had particularly distinguished the famous surgeon N. I. Pirogov, then a trustee of the Novorossiysk school district, suggesting that he had "strongly contributed to the alleviation of hostility among my tribesmen toward 'goyish' schools and sciences."[cxvi]) Soon after the ascension of Alexander II, the Minister of Education thus formulated the government plan: "It is necessary to spread, by any means, the teaching of subjects of general education, while avoiding interference with the religious education of children, allowing parents to take care

of it without any restrictions or hindrances on the part of government."[cxvii] Education in state public schools was made mandatory for children of Jewish merchants and honorary citizens.[cxviii]

Yet all these measures, privileges and invitations, did not lead to a drastic increase in Jewish admissions. By 1863 the share of Jewish students in Russian schools reached 3.2%,[cxix] that is, equal to their percentage in the population of the empire. Apart from the rejection of Russian education by the Jewry, there was a certain influence from Jewish public leaders who now saw their task differently: "With the advent of the Age of Great Reforms, 'the friends of enlightenment' had merged the question of mass education with the question of the legal situation of Jews,"[cxx] that is, they began struggling for the immediate removal of all remaining restrictions. After the shock of the Crimean War, such a liberal possibility seemed quite realistic.

But after 1874, following enactment of the new military statute which "granted military service privileges to educated individuals," almost a magical change happened with Jewish education. Jews began entering public schools in mass.[cxxi] "After the military reform of 1874, even Orthodox Jewish families started sending their sons into high schools and institutions of higher learning to reduce their term of military service."[cxxii] Among these privileges were not only draft deferral and easement of service but also, according to the recollections of Mark Aldanov, the possibility of taking the officer's examination "and receiving officer rank." "Sometimes they attained titles of nobility."[cxxiii]

In the 1870s "an enormous increase in the number of Jewish students in public education institutions" occurred, leading to creation of numerous degreed Jewish intelligentsia." In 1881 Jews composed around 9% of all university students; by 1887, their share increased to 13.5%, i.e., one out of every seven students. In some universities Jewish representation was much higher: in the Department of Medicine of Kharkov University Jews comprised 42% of student body; in the Department of Medicine of Odessa University — 31%, and in the School of Law — 41%.[cxxiv] In all schools of the country, the percentage of Jews doubled to 12% from 1870 to 1880 (and compared to 1865, it had quadrupled). In the Odessa school district it reached 32% by 1886, and in some schools it was 75% and even more.[cxxv] (When D. A. Tolstoy, the Minister of Education from 1866, had begun school reforms in 1871 by introducing the Classical education standard with emphasis on antiquity, the ethnic Russian intelligentsia boiled over, while Jews did not mind).

However, for a while, these educational developments affected only "the Jewish bourgeoisie and intelligentsia. The wide masses remained faithful … to their cheders and yeshivas," as the Russian elementary school offered nothing in the way of privileges."[cxxvi] "The Jewish masses remained in isolation as before due to specific conditions of their internal and outside life."[cxxvii] Propagation of modern universal culture was extremely slow and new things took root with great difficulty among the masses of people living in shtetls and towns of the Pale of Settlement in the atmosphere of very strict religious traditions and

discipline."[cxxviii] "Concentrated within the Pale of Settlement, the Jewish masses felt no need for the Russian language in their daily lives…. As before, the masses were still confined to the familiar hold of the primitive cheder education."[cxxix] And whoever had just learned how to read had to immediately proceed to reading the Bible in Hebrew.[cxxx]

From the government's point of view, opening up general education to Jews rendered state Jewish schools unnecessary. From 1862 Jews were permitted to take posts of senior supervisors in such schools and so "the personnel in these schools was being gradually replenished with committed Jewish pedagogues, who, acting in the spirit of the time, worked to improve mastery of Russian language and reduce teaching of specifically Jewish subjects."[cxxxi] In 1873 these specialized schools were partially abolished and partially transformed, some into primary specialized Jewish schools of general standard, with 3 or 6 years study courses, and two specialized rabbinical schools in Vilna and Zhitomir were transformed into teacher training colleges.[cxxxii] The government … sought to overcome Jewish alienation through integrated education; however, the Commission for Arranging the Jewish Way of Life was receiving reports both from Jewish advocates, often high-ranked, and from the opponents of reform who insisted that "Jews must never be treated … in the same way as other ethnic groups of the Empire, that they should not be permitted unrestricted residence all over the country; it might be allowed only after all possible measures were tried to turn Jews into useful productive citizens in the places where they live now and when these measures would prove their success beyond any doubt."[cxxxiii]

Meanwhile, through the shock of ongoing reforms, especially of the abolition of the burdensome recruiting obligation in 1856 (and through it the negation of the corresponding power of Jewish leaders over their communities), and then of the repeal of the associated special taxation in 1863, "the administrative power of the community leaders was significantly weakened in comparison to their almost unrestricted authority in the past" inherited from the Qahal (abolished in 1844), that omnipotent arbiter of the Jewish life.[cxxxiv]

It was then, at the end of 1850s and during the 1860s, when the baptized Jew, Yakov Brafman, appeared before the government and later came out publicly in an energetic attempt at radical reformation of the Jewish way of life. He had petitioned the Tsar with a memorandum and was summoned to St. Petersburg for consultations in the Synod. He set about exposing and explaining the Qahal system (though a little bit late, since the Qahal had already been abolished). For that purpose he had translated into Russian the resolutions of the Minsk Qahal issued in the period between the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries. Initially he published the documents in parts and later (in 1869 and 1875) as a compilation, The Book of Qahal, which revealed the all-encompassing absoluteness of the personal and material powerlessness of the community member. The book "had acquired exceptional weight in the eyes of the authorities and was accepted as an official guidebook; it won recognition (often by hearsay) in wide circles of Russian society"; it was referred to as

the “Brafman’s triumph” and lauded as an “extraordinary success.”[cxxxv] (Later the book was translated into French, German, and Polish.)[cxxxvi] The Book of Qahal managed to instill in a great number of individuals a fanatical hatred toward Jews as the ‘worldwide enemy of Christians’; it had succeeded in spreading misconceptions about Jewish way of life.”[cxxxvii]

The ‘mission’ of Brafman, the collection and translation of the acts issued by the Qahal had “alarmed the Jewish community”; At their demand, a government commission which included the participation of Jewish community representatives was created to verify Brafman’s work. Some “Jewish writers were quick to come forward with evidence that Brafman distorted some of the Qahal documents and wrongly interpreted others”; one detractor had even had doubts about their authenticity.”[cxxxviii] (A century later in 1976, The Short Jewish Encyclopedia confirmed the authenticity of Brafman’s documents and the good quality of his translation but blamed him for false interpretation.[cxxxix] The Russian Jewish Encyclopedia (1994) pointed out that “the documents published by Brafman are a valuable source for studying the history of Jews in Russia at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries.”[cxl] (Apropos, the poet Khodasevich was the grand-nephew of Brafman).

Brafman claimed “that governmental laws cannot destroy the malicious force lurking in the Jewish self-administration … According to him, Jewish self-rule is not limited to Qahals … but allegedly involves the entire Jewish people all over the world … and because of that the Christian peoples cannot get rid of Jewish exploitation until everything that enables Jewish self-segregation is eliminated.” Further, Brafman “view[ed] the Talmud not as a national and religious code but as a ‘civil and political code’ going ‘against the political and moral development of Christian nations’”[cxli] and creating a ‘Talmudic republic’. He insisted that “Jews form a nation within a nation”; that they “do not consider themselves subject to national laws”;[cxlii] that one of the main goals of the Jewish community is to confuse the Christians to turn the latter into no more than fictitious owners of their property.”[cxliii] On a larger scale, he “accused the Society for the Advancement of Enlightenment among the Jews of Russia and the Alliance Israélite Universelle for their role in the ‘Jewish world conspiracy’.”[cxliv] According to Yu. Gessen’s opinion, “the only demand of The Book of Qahal … was the radical extermination of Jewish self-governance” regardless of all their civil powerlessness.[cxlv]

The State Council, “having mitigated the uncompromised style of The Book of Qahal, declared that even if administrative measures would succeed in erasing the outward differences between Jews and the rest of population, “it will not in the least eliminate the attitudes of seclusion and nearly the outright hostility toward Christians which thrive in Jewish communities. This Jewish separation, harmful for the country, can be destroyed, on one hand, through the weakening of social connections between the Jews and reduction of

the abusive power of Jewish elders to the extent possible, and, on the other hand, through spreading of education among Jews, which is actually more important."[cxlvi]

And precisely the latter process — education — was already underway in the Jewish community. A previous Jewish Enlightenment, the Haskalah Movement of the 1840s, was predominantly based on German culture; they were completely ignorant of Russian culture (they were familiar with Goethe and Schiller but did not know Pushkin and Lermontov).[cxlvii] "Until the mid-19th century, even educated Jews, with rare exceptions, having mastered the German language, at the same time did not know the Russian language and literature."[cxlviii] However, as those Maskilim sought self-enlightenment and not the mass education of the Jewish people, the movement died out by the 1860s.[cxlix] "In the 1860s, Russian influences burst into the Jewish society. Until then Jews were not living but rather residing in Russia,[cl] perceiving their problems as completely unconnected to the surrounding Russian life. Before the Crimean War the Jewish intelligentsia in Russia acknowledged German culture exclusively but after the reforms it began gravitating toward Russian culture. Mastery of the Russian language "increases … self-esteem."[cli] From now on the Jewish Enlightenment developed under the strong influence of the Russian culture. "The best … Russian Jewish intellectuals abandoned their people no longer"; they did not depart into the "area of exclusively personal interests", but cared "about making their people's lot easier." Well, after all, Russian literature taught that the strong should devote themselves to the weak.[clii]

However, this new enlightenment of the Jewish masses was greatly complicated by the strong religiosity of said masses, which in the eyes of progressives was doubtlessly a regressive factor,[cliii] whereas the emerging Jewish Enlightenment movement was quite secular for that time. Secularization of the Jewish public consciousness "was particularly difficult because of the exceptional role religion played in the Diaspora as the foundation of Jewish national consciousness over the course of the many centuries." And so "the wide development of secular Jewish national consciousness" began, in essence, only at the end of the century.[cliv] "It was not because of inertia but due to a completely deliberate stance as the Jew did not want risking separation from his God."[clv]

So the Russian Jewish intelligentsia met the Russian culture at the moment of birth. Moreover, it happened at the time when the Russian intelligentsia was also developing expansively and at the time when Western culture gushed into Russian life (Buckle, Hegel, Heine, Hugo, Comte, and Spencer). It was pointed out that several prominent figures of the first generation of Russian Jewish intelligentsia (S. Dubnov, M. Krol, G. Sliozberg, O. Gruzenberg, and Saul Ginzburg) were born in that period, 1860-1866[clvi] (though their equally distinguished Jewish revolutionary peers — M. Gots, G. Gershuni, F. Dan, Azef, and L. Akselrod — were also born during those years and many other Jewish revolutionaries, such as P. Akselrod and L. Deych, were born still earlier, in the 1850s).

In St. Petersburg in 1863 the authorities permitted establishment of the Society for the Spreading of Enlightenment among the Jews in Russia (SSE) supported by the wealthy Evzel Gintsburg and A. M. Brodsky. Initially, during the first decade of its existence, its membership and activities were limited; the Society was preoccupied with publishing activities and not with school education; yet still its activities caused a violent reaction on the part of Jewish conservatives[clvii] (who also protested against publication of the Pentateuch in Russian as a blasphemous encroachment on the holiness of the Torah). From the 1870s, the SSE provided financial support to Jewish schools. Their cultural work was conducted in Russian, with a concession for Hebrew, but not Yiddish, which was then universally recognized as a 'jargon'.[clviii] In the opinion of Osip Rabinovich, a belletrist, the "'spoiled jargon' used by Jews in Russia cannot 'facilitate enlightenment, because it is not only impossible to express abstract notions in it, but one cannot even express a decent thought with it'."[clix] "Instead of mastering the wonderful Russian language, we Jews in Russia stick to our spoiled, cacophonous, erratic, and poor jargon."[clx] (In their day, the German Maskilim ridiculed the jargon even more sharply.)

And so "a new social force arose in Russian Jewry, which did not hesitate entering the struggle against the union … of capital and synagogue", as expressed by the liberal Yu. I. Gessen. That force, nascent and for the time being weak, was the Jewish periodical press in the Russian language.[clxi]

Its first-born was the Odessa magazine Rassvet [Dawn], published for two years from 1859 to 1861 by the above-mentioned O. Rabinovich. The magazine was positioned to serve "as a medium for dissemination of 'useful knowledge, true religiousness, rules of communal life and morality'; it was supposed to predispose Jews to learn the Russian language and to 'become friends with the national scholarship'"[clxii] Rassvet also reported on politics, expressing "love for the Fatherland" and the intention to promote "the government's views"[clxiii] with the goal "of communal living with other peoples, participating in their education and sharing their successes, while at the same time preserving, developing, and perfecting our distinct national heritage."[clxiv] The leading Rassvetpublicist, L. Levanda, defined the goal of the magazine as twofold: "to act defensively and offensively: defensively against attacks from the outside, when our human rights and confessional (religious) interests must be defended, and offensively against our internal enemy: obscurantism, everydayness, social life troubles, and our tribal vices and weaknesses."[clxv]

This last direction, "to reveal the ill places of the inner Jewish life," aroused a fear in Jewish circles that it "might lead to new legislative repressions." So the existing Jewish newspapers (in Yiddish) "saw the Rassvet's direction as extremely radical." Yet these same moderate newspapers by their mere appearance had already shaken "'the patriarchal structure' of [Jewish] community life maintained by the silence of the people."[clxvi] Needless to say, the struggle between the rabbinate and Hasidic Judaism went on unabated during that period and this new 1860s' struggle of the leading publicists against the stagnant foundations of

daily life had added to it. Gessen noted that "in the 1860s, the system of repressive measures against ideological opponents did not seem offensive even for the conscience of intelligent people." For example, publicist A. Kovner, 'the Jewish Pisarev' [a radical Russian writer and social critic], could not refrain from tipping off a Jewish newspaper to the Governor General of Novorossiysk.[clxvii] (In the 1870s Pisarev "was extremely popular among Jewish intellectuals.")[clxviii]

M. Aldanov thinks that Jewish participation in Russian cultural and political life had effectively begun at the end of the 1870s (and possibly a decade earlier in the revolutionary movement).[clxix]

In the 1870s new Jewish publicists (L. Levanda, the critic S. Vengerov, the poet N. Minsky) began working with the general Russian press. (According to G. Aronson, Minsky expressed his desire to go to the Russo-Turkish War to fight for his brothers Slavs). The Minister of Education Count Ignatiev then expressed his faith in Jewish loyalty to Russia. After the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, rumors about major auspicious reforms began circulating among the Jews. In the meantime, the center of Jewish intellectual life shifted from Odessa to St. Petersburg, where new writers and attorneys gained prominence as leaders of public opinion. In that hopeful atmosphere, publication of Rassvet was resumed in St. Petersburg in 1879. In the opening editorial, M. I. Kulisher wrote: "Our mission is to be an organ of expression of the necessities of Russian Jews … for promoting the awakening of the huge mass of Russian Jews from mental hibernation … it is also in the interests of Russia…. In that goal the Russian Jewish intelligentsia does not separate itself from the rest of Russian citizens."[clxx]

Alongside the development of the Jewish press, Jewish literature could not help but advance —first in Hebrew, then in Yiddish, and then in Russian, inspired by the best of Russian literature.[clxxi] Under Alexander II, "there were quite a few Jewish authors who persuaded their co-religionists to study the Russian language and look at Russia as their homeland."[clxxii]

Naturally, in the conditions of the 1860s-1870s, the Jewish educators, still few in numbers and immersed in Russian culture, could not avoid moving toward assimilation, in the same direction "which under analogous conditions led the intelligent Jews of Western Europe to unilateral assimilation with the dominant people."[clxxiii] However, there was a difference: in Europe the general cultural level of the native peoples was consistently higher and so in Russia these Jews could not assimilate with the Russian people, still weakly touched by culture, nor with the Russian ruling class (who rejected them); they could only assimilate with the Russian intelligentsia, which was then very small in number but already completely secular, rejecting, among other things, their God. Now Jewish educators also tore away from Jewish religiosity and, "being unable to find an alternative bond with their people, they were becoming completely estranged from them and spiritually considered themselves solely as Russian citizens."[clxxiv]

"A worldly rapprochement between the Russian and Jewish intelligentsias" was developing.[clxxv] It was facilitated by the general revitalization of Jewish life with several categories of Jews now allowed to live outside the Pale of Settlement. Development of railroad communications and possibilities of travel abroad — "all this contributed to a closer contact of the Jewish ghetto with the surrounding world."[clxxvi] Moreover, by the 1860s "up to one-third … of Odessa's Jews could speak Russian."[clxxvii] The population there grew quickly, "because of massive resettlement to Odessa of both Russian and foreign Jews, the latter primarily from Germany and Galicia."[clxxviii] The blossoming of Odessa by the middle of the 19th century presaged the prosperity of all Russian Jewry toward the end of the 19th – to the beginning of 20th century. Free Odessa developed according to its own special laws, differing from the All-Russian statutes since the beginning of the 19th century. It used to be a free port and was even open to Turkish ships during the war with Turkey. "The main occupation of Odessa's Jews in this period was the grain trade. Many Jews were small traders and middlemen (mainly between the landowners and the exporters), as well as agents of prominent foreign and local (mainly Greek) wheat trading companies. At the grain exchange, Jews worked as stockbrokers, appraisers, cashiers, scalers, and loaders"; "the Jews were in a dominant position in grain commerce: by 1870 most of grain export was in their hands. In 1910 … 89.2% of grain exports was under their control."[clxxix] In comparison with other cities in the Pale of Settlement, more Jews of the independent professions lived in Odessa and they had better relations with educated Russian circles, and were favorably looked upon and protected by the high administration of the city…. N. Pirogov [a prominent Russian scientist and surgeon], the Trustee of the Odessa School District from 1856-1858, particularly patronized the Jews."[clxxx] A contemporary observer had vividly described this Odessa's clutter with fierce competition between Jewish and Greek merchants, where "in some years half the city, from the major bread bigwigs, to the thrift store owners, lived off the sale of grain products." In Odessa, with her non-stop business commotion bonded by the Russian language, "it was impossible to draw a line, to separate clearly a 'wheat' merchant or a banker from a man of an intellectual profession."[clxxxi]

Thus in general "among the educated Jews … the process of adopting all things Russian … had accelerated."[clxxxii] "European education and knowledge of the Russian language had become necessities"; "everyone hurried to learn the Russian language and Russian literature; they thought only about hastening integration and complete blending with their social surroundings"; they aspired not only for the mastery of the Russian language but for "for the complete Russification and adoption of 'the Russian spirit', so that "the Jew would not differ from the rest of citizens in anything but religion." The contemporary observer M. G. Morgulis wrote: "Everybody had begun thinking of themselves as citizens of their homeland; everybody now had a new Fatherland."[clxxxiii] "Members of the Jewish intelligentsia believed that 'for the state and public good they had to get rid of their ethnic traits and … to merge with the dominant nationality.' A contemporary Jewish progressive wrote, that 'Jews, as a nation, do not exist', that they 'consider themselves Russians of the Mosaic faith…''Jews recognize that their salvation lies in the merging with the Russian people'."[clxxxiv]

It is perhaps worth naming here Veniamin Portugalov, a doctor and publicist. In his youth he harbored revolutionary sentiments and because of that he even spent some time as a prisoner in the Peter and Paul Fortress. From 1871 he lived in Samara. He "played a prominent role in development of rural health service and public health science. He was one of the pioneers of therapy for alcoholism and the struggle against alcohol abuse in Russia." He also organized public lectures. "From a young age he shared the ideas of Narodniks [a segment of the Ruslsian intelligentsia, who left the cities and went to the people ('narod') in the villages, preaching on the moral right to revolt against the established order] about the pernicious role of Jews in the economic life of the Russian peasantry. These ideas laid the foundation for the dogmas of the Judeo-Christian movement of the 1880s" (The Spiritual Biblical Brotherhood). Portugalov deemed it necessary to free Jewish life from ritualism, and believed that "Jewry could exist and develop a culture and civilization only after being dissolved in European peoples" (he had meant the Russian [people]).[clxxxv]

A substantial reduction in the number of Jewish conversions to Christianity was observed during the reign of Alexander II as it became unnecessary after the abolishment of the institution of military cantonists and the widening of Jewish rights.[clxxxvi] And from now on the sect of Skhariya the Jew began to be professed openly too.[clxxxvii]

Such an attitude on the part of affluent Jews, especially those living outside the Pale of Settlement and those with Russian education, toward Russia as undeniably a homeland is noteworthy. And so it had to be noticed and was. "In view of the great reforms, all responsible Russian Jews were, without exaggeration, patriots and monarchists and adored Alexander II. M. N. Muravyov, then Governor General of the Northwest Krai famous for his ruthlessness toward the Poles [who rebelled in 1863], patronized Jews in the pursuit of the sound objective of winning the loyalty of a significant portion of the Jewish population to the Russian state."[clxxxviii] Though during the Polish uprising of 1863 Polish Jewry was mainly on the side of the Poles;[clxxxix] "a healthy national instinct prompted" the Jews of the Vilnius, Kaunas, and Grodno Guberniyas "to side with Russia because they expected more justice and humane treatment from Russians than from the Poles, who, though historically tolerating the Jews, had always treated them as a lower race."[cxc] (This is how Ya. Teitel described it: "The Polish Jews were always detached from the Russian Jews"; they looked at Russian Jews from the Polish perspective. On the other hand, the Poles in private shared their opinion on the Russian Jews in Poland: "The best of these Jews are our real enemy. Russian Jews, who had infested Warsaw, Lodz, and other major centers of Poland, brought with them Russian culture, which we do not like.")[cxci]

In those years, the Russification of Jews on its territory was "highly desirable" for the Tsarist government.[cxcii] Russian authorities recognized "socialization with Russian youth … as a sure method of re-education of the Jewish youth to eradicate their 'hostility toward Christians'."[cxciii]

Still, this newborn Russian patriotism among Jews had clear limits. The lawyer and publicist I. G. Orshansky specified that to accelerate the process "it was necessary to create conditions for the Jews such that they could consider themselves as free citizens of a free civilized country."[cxciv] The above-mentioned Lev Levanda, 'a Jewish scholar' living under the jurisdiction of the Governor of Vilnius, then wrote: "I will become a Russian patriot only when the Jewish Question is resolved conclusively and satisfactory." A modern Jewish author who experienced the long and bitter 20th century and then had finally emigrated to Israel, replied to him looking back across the chasm of a century: "Levanda does not notice that one cannot lay down conditions to Motherland. She must be loved unconditionally, without conditions or pre-conditions; she is loved simply because she is the Mother. This stipulation — love under conditions — was extremely consistently maintained by the Russian-Jewish intelligentsia for one hundred years, though in all other respects they were ideal Russians"[cxcv]

And yet in the described period "only small and isolated groups of Jewry became integrated into 'Russian civil society; moreover, it was happening in the larger commercial and industrial centers … leading to the appearance of an exaggerated notion about victorious advance of the Russian language deep into Jewish life," all the while "the wide Jewish masses were untouched by the new trends … isolated not only from the Russian society but from the Jewish intelligentsia as well."[cxcvi] In the 1860s and 1870s, the Jewish people en masse were still unaffected by assimilation, and the danger of the Jewish intelligentsia breaking away from the Jewish masses was real. (In Germany, Jewish assimilation went smoother as there were no "Jewish popular masses" there — the Jews were better off socially and did not historically live in such crowded enclaves).[cxcvii]

However, as early as the end of the 1860s, some members of the Jewish intelligentsia began voicing opposition to such a conversion of Jewish intellectuals into simple Russian patriots. Perets Smolensky was the first to speak of this in 1868: that assimilation with the Russian character is fraught with 'national danger' for the Jews; that although education should not be feared, it is necessary to hold on to the Jewish historical past; that acceptance of the surrounding national culture still requires perservation of the Jewish national character[cxcviii]; and that the Jews are not a religious sect, but a nation."[cxcix] So if the Jewish intelligentsia withdraws from its people, the latter would never liberate itself from administrative oppression and spiritual stupor. (The poet I. Gordon had put it this way: "Be a man on the street and a Jew at home.")

The St. Petersburg journals Rassvet (1879-1882) and Russkiy Evrei [Russian Jew] had already followed this direction.[cc] They successfully promoted the study of Jewish history and contemporary life among Jewish youth. At the end of the 1870s and the beginning of the 1880s, cosmopolitan and national directions in Russian Jewry became distinct.[cci] "In essence, the owners of Rassvet had already abandoned the belief in the truth of assimilation…. Rassvet unconsciously went by the path … of the awakening of ethnic identity

… it was clearly expressing aJewish national bias…. The illusions of Russification … were disappearing."[ccii]

The general European situation of the latter half of the 19th century facilitated development of national identity. There was a violent Polish uprising, the war for the unification of Italy, and then of Germany, and later of the Balkan Slavs. The national idea blazed and triumphed everywhere. Obviously, these developments would continue among the Jewish intelligentsia even without the events of 1881-1882.

Meanwhile, in the 1870s, the generally favorable attitudes of Russians toward Jews, which had developed during the Alexandrian reforms, began to change. Russian society was concerned with Brafman's publications, which were taken quite seriously.

All this coincided with the loud creation of the Alliance Israélite Universelle in Paris in 1860; its goal was "to defend the interests of Jewry" all over the world; its Central Committee was headed by Adolphe Cremieux.[cciii] "Insufficiently well-informed … about the situation of Jews in Russia," the Alliance "took interest in Russian Jewry" and soon "began consistently working on behalf of Russian Jews." The Alliance did not have Russian branches and did not function within Russia. Apart from charitable and educational work, the Alliance, in defending Russian Jews, several times addressed Russian government directly, though often inappropriately. (For example, in 1866 the Alliance appealed to prevent the execution of Itska Borodai who was convicted of politically motivated arson. However, he was not sentenced to death at all, and other Jews implicated in the affair were acquitted even without the petition. In another case, Cremieux protested against the resettlement of Jews to the Caucasus and the Amur region — although there was no such Russian government plan whatsoever. In 1869 he again protested, this time against the nonexistent persecution of Jews in St. Petersburg.[cciv] Cremieux had also complained to the President of the United States about similarly nonexistent persecutions against the Jewish religion by the Russian government). Nevertheless, according to the report of the Russian ambassador in Paris, the newly-formed Alliance (with the Mosaic Tablets over the Earth on its emblem) had already enjoyed "extraordinary influence on Jewish societies in all countries." All this alarmed the Russian government as well as Russian public. Yakov Brafman actively campaigned against the Universal Jewish Alliance. He claimed that the Alliance, "like all Jewish societies, is double-faced (its official documents proclaim one thing while the secret ones say another)" and that the task of the Alliance is "to shield the Jewry from the perilous influence of Christian civilization."[ccv] As a result, the Society for the Spreading of Enlightenment among the Jews in Russia was also accused of having a mission "to achieve and foster universal Jewish solidarity and caste-like seclusion."[ccvi])

Fears of the Alliance were also nurtured by the very emotional opening proclamation of its founders "to the Jews of all nations" and by the dissemination of false Alliance documents. Regarding Jewish unity the proclamation contained the following wording: "Jews! … If you believe that the Alliance is good for you, that while being the parts of different nations you

nevertheless can have common feelings, desires, and hopes … if you think that your disparate efforts, good aspirations and individual ambitions could become a major force when united and moving in one direction and toward one goal … then please support us with your sympathy and assistance."[ccvii]

Later in France a document surfaced containing an alleged proclamation "To Jews of the Universe" by Aldolphe Cremieux himself. It was very likely a forgery. Perhaps it was one of the drafts of the opening proclamation not accepted by the Alliance founders. However it had resonated well with Brafman's accusations of the Alliance having hidden goals: "We live in alien lands and we cannot take an interest in the variable concerns of those nations until our own moral and material interests are endangered … the Jewish teachings must fill the entire world…." Heated arguments were exchanged in this regard in Russian press. I. S. Aksakov concluded in his newspaper Rus that "the question of the document under discussion being … a falsehood is rather irrelevant in this case because of veracity of the expressed herein Jewish views and aspirations."[ccviii]

The pre-revolutionary Jewish Encyclopedia writes that from the 1870s "fewer voices were heard in defense of Jews" in the Russian press. "The notion of Jews allegedly united under the aegis of a powerful political organization administered by the Alliance Israélite Universelle was taking root in Russian society."[ccix] Thus the foundation of the Alliance produced in Russia (and possibly not only in Russia) a reaction counterproductive to the goals that the Alliance had specified.

If the founders of the Alliance could have foreseen the sheer scale of condemnations against the idea of worldwide Jewish solidarity and even the accusations of conspiracy which had erupted after the creation of the organization, they might have refrained from following that route, especially considering that the Alliance did not alter the course of Jewish history.

After 1874, when a new military charter introducing the universal military service obligation in Russia came into force, "numerous news article on draft evasion by Jews began fueling resentment against the Jews in the Russian society ."[ccx] The Alliance Israélite Universelle was accused of intending "to care about young Jews leaving Russia to escape conscription enforced by the new law" so that "using support from abroad, the Jews would have more opportunities than other subjects to move out of the country." (This question would arise once again precisely a century later in the 1970s.) Cremieux replied that the mission of the Alliance was "the struggle against religious persecution" and that the Alliance had decided "henceforth not to assist Jews trying to evade military obligation in Russia." Rather it would issue "an appeal to our co-religionists in Russia in order to motivate them to comply with all the requirements of the new law."[ccxi]

Besides crossing the border, another way to evade military service was self-mutilation. General Denikin (who was quite a liberal before and even during the revolution) described hundreds of bitter cases of the self-mutilation he personally saw during several years of

service at the military medical examination board in Volyn Guberniya. Such numerous and desperate self-injuries are all the more striking considering that it was already the beginning of the 20th century.[ccxii]

As previously mentioned, the influx of Jews into public schools, professional schools and institutions of higher learning had sharply increased after 1874 when a new military charter stipulating educational privileges came into force. This increase was dramatic. While calls to restrict Jewish enrollment in public education institutions were heard from the Northwestern Krai even before, in 1875, the Ministry of Public Education informed the government that it was impossible to admit all Jews trying to enter public educational institutions without constraining the Christian population."[ccxiii]

It is worth mentioning here the G. Aronson's regretful note that even D. Mendeleev of St. Petersburg University "showed anti-Semitism."[ccxiv] The Jewish Encyclopedia summarizes all of the 1870s period as "a turnaround in the attitudes of a part of Russian intelligentsia … which rejected the ideals of the previous decade especially in regard to … the Jewish Question."[ccxv]

An interesting feature of that time was that it was the press (the rightist one, of course) and not governmental circles that was highly skeptical (and in no way hostile) towards the project of full legal emancipation of the Jews. The following quotes are typical. How can "all the citizenship rights be granted to this … stubbornly fanatical tribe, allowing them to occupy the highest administrative posts? … Only education … and social progress can truly bring together Jews and Christians…. Introduce them into the universal family of civilization, and we will be the first to say words of love and reconciliation to them." " Civilization will generally benefit from such a rapprochement as the intelligent and energetic tribe will contribute much to it. The Jews … will realize that time is ripe to throw off the yoke of intolerance which originates in the overly strict interpretations of the Talmud." "Until education brings the Jews to the thought that it is necessary to live not only at the expense of Russian society but also for the good of this society, no discussion could be held about granting them more rights than those they have now." "Even if it is possible to grant the Jews all civil rights, then in any case they cannot be allowed into any official positions 'where Christians would be subject to their authority and where they could have influence on the administration and legislation of a Christian country.'"[ccxvi]

The attitude of the Russian press of that time is well reflected in the words of the prominent St. Petersburg newspaper Golos: "Russian Jews have no right to complain that the Russian press is biased against their interests. Most Russian periodicals favor equal civil rights for Jews;" it is understandable "that Jews strive to expand their rights toward equality with the rest of Russian citizens"; yet … "some dark forces drive Jewish youth into the craziness of political agitation. Why is that only a few political trials do not list Jews among defendants, and, importantly, among the most prominent defendants? … That and the common Jewish practice of evading military service are counterproductive for the cause of expanding the

civil rights of Jews"; "one aspiring to achieve rights must prove beforehand his ability to fulfill the duties which come with those rights" and "avoid putting himself into an extremely unfavorable and dismal position with respect to the interests of state and society."[ccxvii]

Yet, the Encyclopedia notes, "despite all this propaganda, bureaucratic circles were dominated by the idea that the Jewish Question could only be resolved through emancipation. For instance, in March 1881 a majority of the members of the Commission for Arranging the Jewish Way of Life tended to think that it was necessary to equalize the Jews in rights with the rest of the population."[ccxviii] Raised during the two decades of Alexandrian reforms, the bureaucrats of that period were in many respects taken by the reforms' triumphant advances. And so proposals quite radical and favorable to Jews were put forward on several occasions by Governors General of the regions constituting the Pale of Settlement.

Let's not overlook the new initiatives of the influential Sir Moses Montefiore, who paid another visit to Russia in 1872; and the pressure of both Benjamin Disraeli and Bismarck on Russian State Chancellor Gorchakov at the Berlin Congress of 1878. Gorchakov had to uneasily explain that Russia was not in the least against religious freedom and did grant it fully, but "religious freedom should not be confused with Jews having equal political and civil rights."[ccxix]

Yet the situation in Russia developed toward emancipation. And when in 1880 the Count Loris-Melikov was made the Minister of the Interior with exceptional powers, the hopes of Russian Jews for emancipation had become really great and well-founded. Emancipation seemed impending and inevitable.

And at this very moment the members of Narodnaya Volya assassinated Alexander II, thus destroying in the bud many liberal developments in Russia, among them the hopes for full Jewish civil equality.

Sliozberg noted that the Tsar was killed on the eve of Purim. After a series of attempts, the Jews were not surprised at this coincidence, but they became restless about the future.[ccxx]

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[xxxix] EE [JE], T 15, p. 209; T 1, p. 824.

[xl] Perezhitoe: Sbornik, posvyashchenniy obshchestvennoy i kul'turnoy istorii evreyev v Rossii [Past Experiences: An Anthology Dedicated to the Social and Cultural History of the Jews in Russia]. T 2, Sankt-St. Petersburg, 1910, p. 102.

[xli] G.B. Sliozberg, T 1, p. 137.

[xlii] KEE [SJE], T 7, p. 327.

[xliii] EE [JE], T 1, p. 819.

[xliv] Also, T 13, p. 943-944.

[xlv] I.M. Trotskiy. Samodeyatel'nost i samopomoshch' evreyev v Rossii [The Individual Initiative and Self-Help of the Jews in Russia] (OPE, ORT, EKO, OZE, EKOPO) // KRE-1, p. 471.

[xlvi] Yu. Gessen. T 2, p. 210.

[xlvii] EE [JE], T 13, p. 947; KEE [SJE], T 4, p. 770.

[xlviii] KEE [SJE], T 5, p. 473.

[xlix] Also, T 4, p. 255.

[l] Yu Gessen. T 2, p. 159-160, 210.

[li] Also, p. 159.

[lii] B.Ts. Dinur. Religiozno-natsional'niy oblik russkogo evreystva [The Religious-National Look of Russian Jewry] // KRE-1, p. 311-312.

[liii] EE [JE], T 12, p. 640.

[liv] Yu Gessen, T 2, p. 161.

[lv] Also.

[lvi] Also.

[lvii] Yu. Orshanskiy, p. 12.

[lviii] I. Orshanskiy, p. 1-15.

[lix] Yu. Gessen, T 2, p. 224-225.

[lx] EE [JE], T 3, p. 83-84.

[lxi] EE* [JE], T 7, p. 301-302.

[lxii] G.B. Sliozberg, T 2, p. 155-156.

[lxiii] EE [JE], T 3, p. 164.

[lxiv] I. Orshanskiy, p. 65-68.

[lxv] KEE [SJE], T 7, p. 332.

[lxvi] EE [JE], T 1, p. 824.

[lxvii] Also*, T 3, p. 164.

[lxviii] Also, T 1, p. 824; KEE [SJE], T 7, p. 332.

[lxix] Golos [The Voice], 1881, No46, 15 (27) February, p. 1.

[lxx] A. Shmakov. "Evreyskie" rechi ["Jewish" Questions]. Moscow, 1897, p. 101-103.

[lxxi] Entsiklopedicheskiy slovar' [Encyclopedic Dictionary]: V 82 T. Sankt-St. Petersburg.: Brokgauz i Efron, 1890-1904. T 54, p. 86.

[lxxii] EE [JE], T 3, p. 164-167.

[lxxiii] G.B. Sliozberg, T 1, p. 116.

[lxxiv] V.N. Nikitin*, p. 448, 483, 529.

[lxxv] Also*, p 473, 490, 501, 506-507, 530-531, 537-538, 547-548, 667.

[lxxvi] Also, p. 474-475, 502, 547.

[lxxvii] V.N. Nikitin*, p. 502-505, 519, 542, 558, 632, 656, 667.

[lxxviii] Also*, p. 473, 510, 514, 529-533, 550, 572.

[lxxix] Also, p. 447, 647.

[lxxx] EE [JE], T 7, p. 756.

[lxxxi] V.N. Nikitin*, p. 478-479, 524, 529-533, 550-551.

[lxxxii] EE [JE], T 7, p. 756.

[lxxxiii] V.N. Nikitin, p. 534, 540, 555, 571, 611-616, 659.

[lxxxiv] V.N. Nikitin, p. 635, 660-666.

[lxxxv] Also*, p. 658-661.

[lxxxvi] EE [JE], T 7, p. 756.

[lxxxvii] Also, T 16, p. 399.

[lxxxviii] Also, T 2, p. 596.

[lxxxix] Also, T 5, p. 650.

[xc] Also, T 13, p. 606.

[xci] Also, T 5, p. 518; T 13, p. 808.

[xcii] Also, T 16, p. 251.

[xciii] Yu Larin. Evrei i antisemitizm v SSSR [The Jews and Antisemitism in the USSR], p. 36.

[xciv] V.N. Nikitin, p. xii-xiii.

[xcv] N.S. Leskov. Evrei v Rossii: Neskol'ko zamechaniy po evreyskomu voprosu [The Jews in Russia: Several Observations on the Jewish Question]. Pg., 1919 [reprint s izd. 1884], p. 61, 63.

[xcvi] L.N. Tolstoy o evreyakh / Predisl. O.Ya. Pergamenta [L.N. Tolstoy on the Jews / Foreword O.Ya. Pergamenta], Sankt-PeterburgSt. Petersburg.: Vremya [Time], 1908, p. 15.

[xcvii] EE [JE], T 15, p. 492.

[xcviii] I. Orshanskiy, p. 71-72, 95-98, 106-107, 158-160.

[xcix] EE [JE], T 13, p. 646.

[c] I.M. Dizhur. Evrei v ekonomicheskoy zhizni Rossii [The Jews in the Economic Life of Russia] // KRE-1, p. 168; EE [JE], T 13, p.662.

[ci] L. Deych. Rol' evreyev…[The Role of the Jews..], T 1, p. 14-15.

[cii] EE [JE], T 13, p. 647, 656-658, 663-664; G.B. Sliozberg, T 3, p. 93; KEE [SJE], T 7, p. 337.

[ciii] M.A. Aldanov. Russkie evrei v 70-80-kh godakh: Istoricheskiy etyud [The Russian Jews in the 1870-1880s: An Historical Essay] // KRE-1, p. 45-46.

[civ] G.B. Sliozberg, T 1, p. 141-142.

[cv] KEE [SJE], T 7, p. 328, 331.

[cvi] EE [JE], T 7, p. 762.

[cvii] Yu. Gessen, T 2, p. 168.

[cviii] Also, p. 168.

[cix] Also, p. 206.

[cx] EE [JE], T 6, p. 712, 715-716.

[cxi] Also, T 13, p. 618.

[cxii] KRE-1, Predislovie [Foreword], p. iii-iv.

[cxiii] Y.L. Teytel'. Iz moey zhizni za 40 let [From My Life of 40 Years]. Paris: Y. Povolotskiy and Company, 1925, p. 15.

[cxiv] I.M. Trotskiy. Evrei v russkoy shkole [The Jews in Russian School] // KRE-1, p. 354.

[cxv] Yu. Gessen. T 2, p. 179.

[cxvi] L. Deych. Rol' evreyev…, T 1, p. 14.

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[cxviii] Also, p. 49.

[cxix] Yu. Gessen, T 2, p. 179.

[cxx] EE [JE], T 13, p. 48.

[cxxi] Yu. Gessen, T 2, p. 208

[cxxii] KEE [SJE], T 7, p. 333.

[cxxiii] M.A. Aldanov // KRE-1, p. 45.

[cxxiv] I.M. Trotskiy. Evrei v russkoy shkole [The Jews in Russian Schools] // KRE-1, p. 355-356.

[cxxv] EE [JE], T 13, p. 50.

[cxxvi] I.M. Trotskiy. Evrei v russkoy shkole [The Jews in Russian Schools] // KRE-1, p. 355-356.

[cxxvii] EE [JE], T 13, p. 618.

[cxxviii] G.Ya. Aronson. V bor'be za grazhdanskie i natsional'nie prava: Obshchestvennie techeniya v russkom evreystve [In the Struggle for Civil and National Rights: Social Currents in Russian Jewry] // KRE-1, p. 207.

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[cxxx] Ya.G. Frumkin. Iz istorii russkogo evreystva: Vospominaniya, materiali, dokumenti [From the History of Russian Jewry: Memoirs, Materials, and Documents] // KRE-1, p. 51.

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[cxxxii] EE [JE], T 1, p. 823.

[cxxxiii] Yu Gessen*, T 2, p. 205.

[cxxxiv] Also, p. 170.

[cxxxv] Also, p. 200-201.

[cxxxvi] KEE [JEE], T 1, p. 532.

[cxxxvii] Yu. Gessen, T 2, p. 200-201.

[cxxxviii] EE [JE], T 4, p. 918.

[cxxxix] KEE [SJE], T 1, p. 532.

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[cxli] Yu. Gessen. T 2, p. 200-201.

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[cxciv] EE [JE], T 3, p. 335.

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[cxcvi] Yu. Gessen, T 2, p. 181.

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Chapter 5: After the murder of Alexander II

The murder of the Tsar-Liberator, Alexander II, shocked the people's consciousness – something the Narodovol'tsi intended, but that has been intentionally or unintentionally ignored by historians with the passing of decades. The deaths of heirs or tsars of the previous century – Aleksei Petrovich, Ivan Antonovich, Peter III, and Paul – were violent, but that was unknown to the people. The murder of March 1st, 1881, caused a panic in minds nationwide. For the common people, and particularly for the peasant masses it was as if the very foundations of their lives were shaken. Again, as the Narodovol'tsi calculated, this could not help but invite some explosion.

And an explosion did occur, but an unpredictable one: Jewish pogroms in Novorossiya and Ukraine.

Six weeks after the regicide, the pogroms of Jewish shops, institutions, and homes "suddenly engulfed a vast territory, with tremendous, epidemic force."[1] "Indeed, it was rather spontaneous. … Local people, who, for the most different reasons desired to get even with the Jews, posted incendiary posters and organized basic cadres of pogromists, which were quickly joined by hundreds of volunteers, who joined without any exhortation, caught up in the generally wild atmosphere and promise of easy money. In this there was something spontaneous. However, … even the crowds, fueled by alcohol, while committing theft and violence, directed their blows in one direction only: in the direction of the Jews – the unruliness only stopping at the thresholds of Christian homes."[2]

The first pogrom occurred in Elizavetgrad, on 15 April. "Disorder intensified, when peasants from the neighboring settlements arrived, in order to profit off the goods of the Jews." At first the military did not act, because of uncertainty; finally "significant cavalry forces succeeded in ending the pogrom."[3] "The arrival of fresh forces put an end to the pogrom."[4] "There was no rape and murder in this pogrom."[5] According to other sources: "one Jew was killed. The pogrom was put down on 17 April by troops, who fired into the crowd of thugs."[6] However, "from Elizavetgrad the stirring spread to neighboring settlements; in the majority of cases, the disorders were confined to plundering of taverns." And after a week, a pogrom occurred in the Anan'evskiy Uezd [district] of Odessa Guberniya [province], then in Anan'ev itself, "where it was caused by some petty bourgeois, who spread a rumor that the Tsar was killed by Jews, and that there was an official order for the massacre of Jews, but the authorities were hiding this."[7] On 23 April there was a brief pogrom in Kiev, but it was soon stopped with military forces. However, in Kiev on 26 April a new pogrom broke out, and by the following day it had spread to the Kiev suburbs – and this was the largest pogrom in the whole chain of them; but they ended without human fatalities."[8] (Another tome of the same Encyclopedia reports the opposite, that "several Jews were killed."[9])

After Kiev, pogroms took place again in approximately fifty settlements in the Kiev Guberniya, during which "property of the Jews was subjected to plunder, and in isolated cases battery occurred." At the end of the same April a pogrom took place in Konotop, "caused mainly by workers and railroad hands, accompanied by one human fatality; in Konotop there were instances of self-defense from the Jewish side." There was still an echo of the Kiev Pogrom in Zhmerinka, in "several settlements of Chernigov Guberniya;" at the start of May, in the small town of Smel, where "it was suppressed with arriving troops the next day" ("an apparel store was plundered"). With echoes in the course of May, at the start of summer pogroms still broke out in separate areas in Ekaterinoslav and Poltava guberniyas (Aleksandrovsk, Romni, Nezhin, Pereyaslavl, and Borisov). Insignificant disorders took place somewhere in Melitopol Uezd. There were cases, when peasants immediately compensated Jews for their losses."[10]

"The pogrom movement in Kishinev, which began on 20 April, was nipped in the bud."[11] There were no pogroms in all of Byelorussia – not in that year, nor in the following years,[12] although in Minsk a panic started among the Jews during rumors about pogroms in the Southwestern Krai – on account of a completely unexpected occurrence.[13]

And next in Odessa. Only Odessa already knew Jewish pogroms in the 19th Century – in 1821, 1859, and 1871. "Those were sporadic events, caused mainly by unfriendliness toward Jews on the part of the local Greek population,"[14] that is, on account of the commercial competition of the Jews and Greeks; in 1871 there was a three-day pogrom of hundreds of Jewish taverns, shops, and homes, but without human fatalities.

I.G. Orshanskiy writes in more detail about this pogrom, and states, that Jewish property was being intentionally destroyed: heaps of watches from the jewelers – they did not steal them, but carried them out to the roadway and smashed them. He agrees that the "nerve center" of the pogrom was hostility toward the Jews on the part of the Greek merchants, particularly owing to the fact, that after the Crimean War the Odessa Jews took the grocery trade and colonial commodities from the Greeks. But there was "a general dislike toward the Jews on the part of the Christian population of Odessa. … This hostility manifested far more consciously and prominently among the intelligent and affluent class than among the common working people." You see, however, that different peoples get along in Odessa; "why then did only Jews arouse general dislike toward themselves, which sometimes turns into severe hatred?" One high school teacher explained to his class: "The Jews are engaged in incorrect economic relations with the rest of population." Orshanskiy objects that such an explanation removes "the heavy burden of moral responsibility." He sees the same reason in the psychological influence of Russian legislation, which singles out the Jews, namely and only to place restrictions on them. And in the attempt of Jews to break free from restrictions, people see "impudence, insatiableness, and grabbing."[15]

As a result, in 1881 the Odessa administration, already having experience with pogroms – which other local authorities did not have – immediately put down disorders which were

reignited several times, and "the masses of thugs were placed in vessels and dragged away from the shore"[16] – a highly resourceful method. (In contradiction to the pre-revolutionary, the modern Encyclopedia writes, that this time the pogrom in Odessa continued for three days).[17]

The pre-revolutionary Encyclopedia recognizes, that "the government considered it necessary to decisively put down violent attempts against the Jews";[18] so it was the new Minister of Interior Affairs, Count N.P. Ignatiev, (who replaced Loris-Melikov in May, 1881), who firmly suppressed the pogroms; although it was not easy to cope with rising disturbances of "epidemic strength" – in view of the complete unexpectedness of events, the extremely small number of Russian police at that time (Russia's police force was then incomparably smaller than the police forces in the West European states, much less than those in the Soviet Union), and the rare stationing of military garrisons in those areas. "Firearms were used for defense of the Jews against pogromists."[19] There was firing in the crowd, and [people] were shot dead. For example, in Borisov "soldiers shot and killed several peasants."[20] Also, in Nezhin "troops stopped a pogrom, by opening fire at the crowd of peasant pogromists; several people were killed and wounded."[21] In Kiev 1,400 people were arrested.[22]

All this together indicates a highly energetic picture of enforcement. But the government acknowledged its insufficient preparedness. An official statement said that during the Kiev pogrom "the measures to restrain the crowds were not taken with sufficient timeliness and energy."[23] In a report to His Majesty in June 1881 the Director of the Police Department, V.K. Plehve, named the fact that courts martial "treated the accused extremely leniently and in general dealt with the matter quite superficially" as "one of the reasons for the development and insufficiently quick suppression of the disorders'" Alexander III made a note in the report: "This is inexcusable."[24]

But forthwith and later it did not end without accusations, that the pogroms were arranged by the government itself – a completely unsubstantiated accusation, much less absurd, since in April 1881 the same liberal reformer Loris Melikov headed the government, and all his people were in power in the upper administration. After 1917, a group of researchers – S. Dubnov, G. Krasniy-Admoni, and S. Lozinskiy – thoroughly searched for the proof in all the opened government archives – and only found the opposite, beginning with the fact that, Alexander III himself demanded an energetic investigation. (But to utterly ruin Tsar Alexander III's reputation a nameless someone invented the malicious slander: that the Tsar – unknown to anyone, when, and under what circumstances – said: "And I admit, that I myself am happy, when they beat Jews!" And this was accepted and printed in émigré liberation brochures, it went into liberal folklore, and even until now, after 100 years, it has turned up in publications as historically reliable.[25] And even in the Short Jewish Encyclopedia: "The authorities acted in close contact with the arrivals,"[26] that is, with outsiders. And it was 'clear' to Tolstoy in Yasnaya Polyana that it was "obvious": all matters

were in the hands of the authorities. If "they wanted one – they could bring on a pogrom; if they didn't want one – there would be no pogrom.")[27]

As a matter of fact, not only was there no incitement on the part of the government, but as Gessen points out: "the rise of numerous pogrom brigades in a short time in a vast area and the very character of their actions, eliminates the thought of the presence of a single organizational center."[28]

And here is another contemporary, living testimony from a pretty much unexpected quarter – from The Black Repartition's Worker's Leaflet; that is, a proclamation to the people, in June 1881. The revolutionary leaflet thus described the picture: "Not only all the governors, but all other officials, police, troops, priests, zemstvo [elected district councils], and journalists – stood up for the Kulak-Jews…The government protects the person and property of the Jews"; threats are announced by the governors "that the perpetrators of the riots will be dealt with according to the full extent of the law…The police looked for people who were in the crowd [of pogromists], arrested them, dragged them to the police station…Soldiers and Cossacks used the rifle butt and the whip…they beat the people with rifles and whips…some were prosecuted and locked up in jail or sent to do hard labor, and others were thrashed with birches on the spot by the police."[29]

Next year, in the spring of 1881, "pogroms renewed but already not in the same numbers and not in the same scale as in the previous year."[30] "The Jews of the city of Balta experienced a particularly heavy pogrom," riots also occurred in the Baltskiy Uezd and still in a few others. "However, according to the number of incidents, and according to their character, the riots of 1882 were significantly inferior to the movement of 1881 – the destruction of the property of Jews was not so frequent a phenomenon."[31] The pre-revolutionary Jewish Encyclopedia reports, that at the time of the pogrom in Balta, one Jew was killed.[32]

A famous Jewish contemporary wrote: in the pogroms of the 1880s, "they robbed unlucky Jews, and they beat them, but they did not kill them."[33] (According to other sources, 6 – 7 deaths were recorded.) At the time of the 1880 – 1890s, no one remembered mass killings and rapes. However, more than a half-century passed – and many publicists, not having the need to delve into the ancient [official] Russian facts, but then having an extensive and credulous audience, now began to write about massive and premeditated atrocities. For example, we read in Max Raisin's frequently published book: that the pogroms of 1881 led to the "rape of women, murder, and maiming of thousands of men, women, and children. It was later revealed, that these riots were inspired and thought out by the very government, which had incited the pogromists and hindered the Jews in their self-defense."[34]

A G.B. Sliozberg, so rationally familiar with the workings of the Russian state apparatus – suddenly declared out-of-country in 1933, that the pogroms of 1881 originated not from below, but from above, with Minister Ignatiev (who at that time was still not Minister – the

old man's memory failed him), and "there was no…doubt, that threads of the work of the pogrom could be found in the Department of Police"[35] – thus the experienced jurist afforded himself dangerous and ugly groundlessness.

And yes, here in a serious present-day Jewish journal – from a modern Jewish author we find that, contrary to all the facts and without bringing in new documents: that in Odessa in 1881 a "three-day pogrom" took place; and that in the Balta pogrom there was "direct participation of soldiers and police"; "40 Jews were killed and seriously wounded, 170 lightly wounded."[36] (We just read in the old Jewish Encyclopedia: in Balta one Jew was killed, and wounded – several. But in the new Jewish Encyclopedia, after a century from the events, we read: in Balta "soldiers joined the pogromists…Several Jews were killed, hundreds wounded, many women were raped."[37]) Pogroms are too savage and horrible a form of reprisal, for one to so lightly manipulate casualty figures.

There – spattered, basted – is it necessary to begin excavations again?

The causes of those first pogroms were persistently examined and discussed by contemporaries. As early as 1872, after the Odessa pogrom, the General-Governor of the Southwestern Krai warned in a report, that similar events could happen in his Krai also, for "here the hatred and hostility toward Jews has an historical basis, and only the material dependence of the peasants upon Jews together with the measures of the administration currently holds back an indignant explosion of the Russian population against the Jewish tribe." The General-Governor reduced the essence of the matter to economics, as he "reckoned and evaluated the business and manufacturing property in Jewish hands in the Southwestern Krai, and pointed to the fact, that, being increasingly engaged in the rent of landed estates, the Jews have re-rented and shifted this land to the peasants on very difficult terms." And such a causation "received wide recognition in 1881 which was full of pogroms."[38]

In the spring of 1881, Loris-Melikov also reported to His Majesty: "The deep hatred of the local population toward the Jews who enslave it lies at the foundation of the present disorders, but ill-intentioned people have undoubtedly exploited this opportunity."[39]

And thus explained the newspapers of the time: "Examining the causes which provoked the pogroms, only a few organs of the periodical press refer to the tribal and religious hatred; the rest think that the pogrom movement arose on economic grounds; in so doing, some see a protest in the unruly behaviors directed specially against the Jews, in light of their economic dominance over the Russian population". Yet others maintained that the mass of the people, in general squeezed economically, "looked for someone to vent their anger out on" and the Jews fit this purpose because of their having little rights.[40] A contemporary of these pogroms, the cited educator, V. Portugalov, also said "In the Jewish pogroms of the 1880s, I saw an expression of protest by the peasants and the urban poor against social injustice."[41]

Ten years later, Yu. I. Gessen emphasized, that "the Jewish population of the southern Guberniyas" in general was able to "find sources of livelihood among the Jewish capitalists, while the local peasantry went through extremely difficult times" as it did not have enough land, "to which the wealthy Jews contributed in part, by re-renting the landowner's lands and raising the rental fee beyond the ability of the peasants."[42]

Let us not leave out still another witness, known for his impartiality and thoughtfulness, whom no one accused of being "reactionary" or of "anti-Semitism" – Gleb Uspenskiy. At the beginning of the 1980s, he wrote: "The Jews were beaten up, namely because they amassed a fortune on other people's needs, other people's work, and did not make bread with their own hands"; "under canes and lashes…you see, the people endured the rule of the Tatar and the German but when the Yid began to harass the people for a ruble – they did not take it!"[43]

But we should note that when soon after the pogroms a deputation of prominent Jews from the capital, headed by Baron G. Gintsburg, came to Alexander III at the beginning of May 1881, His Majesty confidently estimated that "in the criminal disorders in the south of Russia, the Jews served only as a pretext, that this business was the hand of the anarchists."[44] And in those same days, the brother of the Tsar, the Grand Prince Vladimir Alexandrovich, announced to the same Gintsburg, that: "the disorders, as is now known by the government, have their sources not exclusively agitation against the Jews, but an aspiration to the work of sedition in general." And the General-Governor of the Southwestern Krai also reported, that "the general excited condition of the population is the responsibility of propagandists."[45] And in this the authorities turned out to be well-informed. Such quick statements from them reveal that the authorities did not waste time in the investigation. But because of the usual misunderstanding of the Russian administration of that time, and its incomprehension of the role of publicity, they did not report the results of the investigation to the public. Sliozberg blames that on the central authority in that it did not even make "attempts to vindicate itself of accusations of permitting the pogroms."[46] (True, but after all, it accused the government, as we saw, of deliberate instigation and guidance of the pogroms. It is absurd to start with proof that you are not a criminal.)

Yet not everyone wanted to believe that the incitements came from the revolutionaries. Here a Jewish memoirist from Minsk recalls: for Jews, Alexander II was not a "Liberator" – he did not do away with the Jewish Pale of Settlement, and although the Jews sincerely mourned his death, they did not say a single bad word against the revolutionaries; they spoke with respect about them, that they were driven by heroism and purity of thought. And during the spring and summer pogroms of 1881, they did not in any way believe that the socialists incited toward them: it was all because of the new Tsar and his government. "The government wished for the pogroms, it had to have a scapegoat." And now, when reliable witnesses from the South later indeed confirmed that the socialists engineered them, they continued to believe that it was the fault of the government.[47]

However, toward the start of the 20th Century, thorough authors admitted: “In the press there is information about the participation of separate members of the party, Narodnaya Vol’ya [People’s Will] in the pogroms; but the extent of this participation is still not clear. … Judging by the party organ, members of the party considered the pogroms as a sort of revolutionary activity, suggesting that the pogroms were training the people for revolutionary action”;[48] “that the action which was easiest of all to direct against the Jews now, could, in its further development, come down on the nobles and officials. Accordingly, proclamations calling for an attack on the Jews were prepared.”[49] Today, it is only superficially talked about, like something generally known: “the active propaganda of the Narodniks (both members of Narodnaya Vol’ya and the Black Repartition was prepared to stir rebellion to any fertile soil, including anti-Semitism.”[50]

From emigration, Tkachev, irrepressible predecessor of Lenin in conspiratorial tactics, welcomed the broadening pogrom movement.

Indeed, the Narodovol’tsi (and the weaker Chernoperedel’tsi [members of Black Repartition) could not wait much longer after the murder of the Tsar which did not cause instantaneous mass revolution which had been predicted and expected by them. With such a state of general bewilderment of minds after the murder of the Tsar-Liberator, only a slight push was needed for the reeling minds to re-incline into any direction.

In that generally unenlightened time, that re-inclination could probably have happened in different ways. (For example, there was then such a popular conception, that the Tsar was killed by nobles, in revenge for the liberation of the peasants.) In Ukraine, anti-Jewish motives existed. Still, it is possible the first movements of spring 1881 anticipated the plot of the Narodovol’tsi - but right then and there they suggested which way the wind would blow: it went against the Jews - never lose touch with the people! A movement from the heart of the masses - Of course! Why not use it? Beat the Jews, and later we will get to the landowners! And now the unsuccessful pogroms in Odessa and Ekaterinoslav were most likely exaggerated by the Narodniks. And the movement of the pogromists along the railroads, and participation of the railroad workers in the pogroms - everything points to the instigation of pogroms by easily mobile agitators, especially with that particularly inciting rumor that “they are hiding the order of the Tsar,” namely to beat the Jews for the murder of his father. (The public prosecutor of the Odessa Judicial Bureau thus emphasized, “that, in perpetrating the Jewish pogroms, the people were completely convinced of the legality of their actions, firmly believing in the existence of a Tsar’s decree, allowing and even authorizing the destruction of Jewish property.”[51] And according to Gessen, “the realization that had taken root in the people, that the Jews stood outside of the law, and that the authorities defending the Jews could not come out against the people”[52] – had now taken effect. The Narodovol’tsi wanted to use this imaginary notion.)

A few such revolutionary leaflets are preserved for history. Such a leaflet from 30 August 1881 is signed by the Executive Committee of the Narodnaya Vol’ya and reads straight away

in Ukrainian: “Who seized the land, forests, and taverns? – The Yid – From whom, muzhik [peasant], do you have to ask for access to your land, at times hiding tears?…From Yids. – Wherever you look, wherever you ask – the Yids are everywhere. The Yid insults people and cheats them; drinks their blood”…and it concludes with the appeal: “Honest working people! Free yourselves!…”[53] And later, in the newspaper, Narodnaya Vol’ya, No. 6: “All attention of the defending people is now concentrated, hastily and passionately, on the merchants, tavern keepers, and moneylenders; in a word, on the Jews, on this local “bourgeoisie,” who avariciously rob working people like nowhere else.” And after, in a forward to a leaflet of the Narodnaya Vol’ya (already in 1883), some “corrections”: “the pogroms began as a nationwide movement, ‘but not against the Jews as Jews, but against Yids; that is, exploiter peoples.’”[54] And in the said leaflet, Zerno, the Chernoperedel’tsi: “The working people cannot withstand the Jewish robbery anymore. Wherever one goes, almost everywhere he runs into the Jew-Kulak. The Jew owns the taverns and pubs; the Jew rents land from the landowners, and then re-rents it at three times higher to the peasant; he buys the wholesale yields of crop and engages in usury, and in the process charges such interest rates, that the people outright call them “Yiddish [rates]”…”This is our blood!” said the peasants to the police officials, who came to seize the Jewish property back from them.” But the same “correction” is in Zerno: “…and far from all among the Jews are wealthy…not all of them are kulaks…Discard with the hostility toward differing peoples and differing faiths” – and unite with them “against the common enemy”: the Tsar, the police, the landowners, and the capitalists.[55]

However these “corrections” already came late. Such leaflets were later reproduced in Elizavetgrad and other cities of the South; and in the “South Russian Worker’s Soviet” in Kiev, where the pogroms were already over, the Narodniks tried to stir them up again in 1883, hoping to renew, and through them – to spread the Russian-wide revolution.

Of course, the pogrom wave in the South was extensively covered in the contemporary press in the capital. In the “reactionary” Moskovskiye Vedomosti, M.N. Katkov, who always defended the Jews, branded the pogroms as originating with “malicious intriguers,” “who intentionally darkened the popular consciousness, forcing people to solve the Jewish Question, albeit not by a path of thorough study, but with the help of “raised fists.”[56]

The articles by prominent writers stand out. I.S. Aksakov, a steadfast opponent of complete civil liberty for the Jews, attempted to warn the government “against too daring steps” on this path, as early as the end of the 1850s. When a law came out allowing Jews with higher degrees to be employed in the administration, he objected (1862) saying that the Jews are “a bunch of people, who completely reject Christian teachings, the Christian ideal and code of morality (and, therefore, the entire foundation of Russian society), and practice a hostile and antagonistic faith.” He was against political emancipation of the Jews, though he did not reject their equalization in purely civil rights, in order that the Jewish people could be provided complete freedom in daily life, self-management, development, enlightenment,

commerce, and even allowing them to reside in all of Russia." In 1867 he wrote, that economically speaking "we should talk not about emancipation for Jews, but rather about the emancipation of Russians from Jews." He noted the blank indifference of the liberal press to the conditions of peasant's life and their needs. And now Aksakov explained the wave of pogroms in 1881 as a manifestation of the popular anger against "Jewish yoke over the Russian local people"; that's why during the pogroms, there was "an absence of theft," only the destruction of property and "a kind of simple-hearted conviction in the justness of their actions"; and he repeated, that it was worth putting the question "not about Jews enjoying equal rights with Christians, but about the equal rights of Christians with Jews, about abolishing factual inequality of the Russian population in the face of the Jews."[57]

On the other hand, an article by M.E. Saltykov-Shchedrin was full of indignation: "The history has never drawn on its pages a question more difficult, more devoid of humanity, and more tortuous, than the Jewish Question…There is not a more inhumane and mad legend than that coming out from the dark ravines of the distant past…carrying the mark of disgrace, alienation, and hatred…Whatever the Jew undertakes, he always remains stigmatized."[58] Shchedrin did not deny, "that a significant contingent of moneylenders and exploiters of various kinds are enlisted from the Jews," but he asked, can we really place blame on the whole Jewish tribe, on account of one type?[59]

Examining the whole discussion of that time, a present-day Jewish author writes: "the liberal, and conditionally speaking, progressive press was defending the thugs."[60] And the pre-revolutionary Jewish Encyclopedia comes to a similar conclusion: "Yet in the progressive circles, sympathies toward the woes of the Jewish people were not displayed sufficiently …they looked at this catastrophe from the viewpoint of the aggressor, presenting him as destitute peasant, and completely ignoring the moral sufferings and material situation of the mobbed Jewish people." And even the radical Patriotic Notes evaluated it thus: the people rose up against the Jews because "they took upon themselves the role of pioneers of Capitalism, because they live according to the new truth and confidently draw their own comfortable prosperity from that new source at the expense of the surrounding community," and therefore, "it was necessary that 'the people are protected from the Jew, and the Jew from the people', and for this the condition of the peasant needs to be improved."[61]

In A Letter from a Christian on the Jewish Question, published in the Jewish magazine Rassvet, D. Mordovtsev, a writer sympathetic to the Jews, pessimistically urged the Jews "to emigrate to Palestine and America, seeing only in this a solution to the Jewish Question in Russia."[62]

Jewish social-political journalism and the memoirs of this period expressed grievance because the printed publications against the Jews, both from the right and from the revolutionary left, followed immediately after the pogroms. Soon (and all the more energetically because of the pogroms) the government would strengthen restrictive measures against the Jews. It is necessary to take note of and understand this insult.

It is necessary to thoroughly examine the position of the government. The general solutions to the problem were being sought in discussions in government and administrative spheres. In a report to His Majesty, N.P. Ignatiev, the new Minister of Internal Affairs, outlined the scope of the problem for the entire previous reign: "Recognizing the harm to the Christian population from the Jewish economic activity, their tribal exclusivity and religious fanaticism, in the last 20 years the government has tried to blend the Jews with the rest of the population using a whole row of initiatives, and has almost made the Jews equal in rights with the native inhabitants." However, the present anti-Jewish movement "incontrovertibly proves, that despite all the efforts of the government, the relations between the Jews and the native population of these regions remain abnormal as in the past," because of the economic issues: after the easing of civil restrictions, the Jews have not only seized commerce and trade, but they have acquired significant landed property. "Moreover, because of their cohesion and solidarity, they have, with few exceptions, directed all their efforts not toward the increase of the productive strength of the state, but primarily toward the exploitation of the poorest classes of the surrounding population." And now, after we have crushed the disorders and defended the Jews from violence, "it seems 'just and urgent to adopt no less energetic measures for the elimination of these abnormal conditions…between the native inhabitants and the Jews, and to protect the population from that harmful activity of the Jews.'"[63]

And in accordance with that, in November 1881, the governmental commissions, comprised of "representatives of all social strata and groups (including Jewish), were established in 15 guberniyas of the Jewish Pale of Settlement, and also in Kharkov Guberniya.[64] The commissions ought to examine the Jewish Question and propose their ideas on its resolution."[65] It was expected that the commissions will provide answers on many factual questions, such as: "In general, which aspects of Jewish economic activity are most harmful for the way of life of the native population in the region?" Which difficulties hinder the enforcement of laws regulating the purchase and rental of land, trade in spirits, and usury by Jews? Which changes are necessary to eliminate evasion of these laws by Jews? "Which legislative and administrative measures in general are necessary to negate the harmful influence of the Jews" in various kinds of economic activity?[66] The liberal "Palenskaya" inter-ministerial "High Commission" established two years later for the revision of laws on the Jews, noted that "the harm from the Jews, their bad qualities, and traits" were somewhat recognized a priori in the program that was given to the provincial commissions.[67]

Yet many administrators in those commissions were pretty much liberal as they were brought up in the stormy epoch of Tsar Alexander II's reforms, and moreover, public delegates participated also. And Ignatiev's ministry received rather inconsistent answers. Several commissions were in favor of abolishing the Jewish Pale of Settlement. "Individual members [of the commissions] – and they were not few" – declared that the only just solution to the Jewish Question was the general repeal of all restrictions.[68] On the other

hand, the Vilnius Commission stated that "because of mistakenly understood notion of universal human equality wrongly applied to Judaism to the detriment of the native people, the Jews managed to "seize economic supremacy"; that the Jewish law permits [them] "to profit from any weakness and gullibility of gentile." "Let the Jews renounce their seclusion and isolation, let them reveal the secrets of their social organization allowing light where only darkness appeared to outsiders; and only then can one think about opening new spheres of activity to the Jews, without fear that Jews wish to use the benefits of the nation, [while] not being members of the nation, and not taking upon themselves a share of the national burden."[69]

"Regarding residence in the villages and hamlets, the commissions found it necessary to restrict the rights of the Jews": to forbid them to live there altogether or to make it conditional upon the agreement of the village communities. Some commissions recommended completely depriving the Jews of the right to possess real estate outside of the cities and small towns, and others proposed establishing restrictions. The commissions showed the most unanimity in prohibiting any Jewish monopoly on alcohol sales in villages. The Ministry gathered the opinions of the governors, and "with rare exceptions, comments from the regional authorities were not favorable to the Jews": to protect the Christian population "from so haughty a tribe as the Jews"; "one can never expect the Jewish tribe to dedicate its talents…to the benefit of the homeland"; "Talmudic morals do not place any obstacles before the Jews if it is a question of making money at the expense of someone outside of the tribe." Yet the Kharkov General-Governor did not consider it possible to take restrictive measures against the whole Jewish population, "without distinguishing the lawful from the guilty"; he proposed to "expand the right of movement for Jews and spread enlightenment among them."[70]

That same autumn, by Ignatiev's initiative, a special "Committee on the Jews" was established (the ninth by count already, with three permanent members, two of them professors), with the task of analyzing the materials of the provincial commissions and in order to draft a legislative bill.[71] (The previous "Commission for the Organization of the Life of the Jews" – that is, the eighth committee on Jews, which existed since 1872 – was soon abolished, "due to mismatch between its purpose and the present state of the Jewish Question.") The new Committee proceeded with the conviction that the goal of integrating the Jews with the rest of the population, toward which the government had striven for the last 25 years, had turned out to be unattainable.[72] Therefore, "the difficulty of resolving the complicated Jewish Question compels [us] to turn for the instruction to the old times, when various novelties did not yet penetrate neither ours, nor foreign legislations, and did not bring with them the regrettable consequences, which usually appear upon adoption of new things that are contrary to the national spirit of the country." From time immemorial the Jews were considered aliens, and should be considered as such.[73]

Gessen comments: "the reactionary could not go further". And if you were so concerned about the national foundations then why you didn't worry about genuine emancipation of the peasantry during the past 20 years?

And it was also true that Tsar Alexander II's emancipation of the peasants proceeded in a confused, unwholesome and corrupt environment.

However: "in government circles there were still people, who did not consider it possible, in general, to change the policy of the preceding reign" [74] – and they were in important posts and strong. And some ministers opposed Ignatiev's proposals. Seeing resistance, he divided the proposed measures into fundamental (for which passing in the regular way required moving through the government and the State Council) and provisional, which could by law be adopted through an accelerated and simplified process. "To convince the rural population that the government protects them from the exploitation by Jews, the permanent residence of Jews outside of their towns and shtetls (and the "government was powerless to protect them from pogroms in the scattered villages"), and buying and renting real estate there, and also trading in spirits was prohibited. And regarding the Jews already living there: it granted to the rural communities the right "to evict the Jews from the villages, based upon a verdict of the village meeting." But other ministers – particularly the Minister of Finance, N. Kh. Bunge, and the Minister of Justice, D.N. Nabokov, did not let Ignatiev implement these measures: they rejected the bill, claiming that it was impossible to adopt such extensive prohibitive measures, "without debating them within the usual legislative process."[75]

So much for the boundless and malicious arbitrariness of the Russian autocracy.

Ignatiev's fundamental measures did not pass, and the provisional ones passed only in a greatly truncated form. Rejected were the provisions to evict the Jews already living in the villages, to forbid their trade in alcohol or their renting and buying land in villages. And only because of the fear that the pogroms might happen again around Easter of 1882, a temporary measure (until passing of comprehensive legislation about the Jews) was passed which prohibited the Jews again, henceforth to take residence and enter into ownership, or make use of real estate property outside of their towns and shtetls (that is, in the villages), and also forbade them "to trade on Sundays and Christian holidays."[76] Concerning the Jewish ownership of local real estate, the government acted "to suspend temporarily the completion of sales and purchase agreements and loans in the name of the Jews…the notarization…of real estate rental agreements … and the proxy management and disposal of property by them".[77] This mere relic of Ignatiev's proposed measures was approved on 3 May 1882, under title of Temporary Regulations (known as the May Regulations). And Ignatiev himself went into retirement after a month and his "Committee on the Jews" ceased its brief existence, and a new Minister of Internal Affairs, Count D.A. Tolstoy, issued a stern directive against possible new pogroms, placing full responsibility on the provincial authorities for the timely prevention of disorders.[78]

Thus, according to the Temporary Regulations of 1882, the Jews who had settled in rural regions before the 3rd of May, were not evicted; their economic activity there was essentially unrestricted. Moreover, these regulations only applied to the "guberniyas of permanent Jewish settlement," not to the guberniyas of the Russian interior. And these restrictions did not extend to doctors, attorneys, and engineers - i.e., individuals with "the right of universal residence according to educational requirement." These restrictions also did not affect any "existing Jewish colonies engaged in agriculture"; and there was still a considerable (and later growing) list of rural settlements, according to which, "in exception" to the Temporary Regulations, Jews were permitted to settle.[79]

After issuance of the "Regulations," inquiries began flowing from the regions and Senate explanations were issued in response. For example: that "journeys through rural regions, temporary stops and even temporary stays of individuals without the right of permanent residence are not prohibited by the Law of 3 May 1882"; that "only the rent of real estates and agrarian lands is prohibited, while rent of all other types of real estate property, such as distillation plants, … buildings for trade and industry, and living quarters is not prohibited." Also, "the Senate deems permissible the notarization of lumbering agreements with the Jews, even if the clearing of a forest was scheduled for a prolonged period, and even if the buyer of the forest was allowed use of the underbrush land"; and finally, that violations of the Law of 3rd May would not be subjected to criminal prosecution.[80]

It is necessary to recognize these Senate clarifications as mitigating, and in many respects, good-natured; "in the 1880s the Senate wrestled with … the arbitrary interpretation of the laws."[81] However, the regulations forbidding the Jews to settle "outside the towns and shtetls" and/or to own "real estate"… "extremely restricted alcohol distillation business by Jews," as "Jewish participation in distillation before the 3rd May Regulations was very significant."[82]

It was exactly this measure to restrict the Jews in the rural wine trade (first proposed as early as 1804) that stirred universal indignation at the "extraordinary severity" "of the May Regulations," even though it was only implemented, and incompletely at that, in 1882. The government stood before a difficult choice: to expand the wine industry in the face of peasant proneness [to drunkeness] and thus to deepen the peasant poverty, or to restrict the free growth of this trade by letting the Jews already living in the villages to remain while stopping others from coming. And that choice – restriction – was deemed cruel.

Yet how many Jews lived in rural regions in 1882? We have already come across post-revolutionary estimates from the state archives: one third of the entire Jewish population of "the Pale" lived in villages, another third lived in shtetls, 29% lived in mid-size cities, and 5% in the major cities.[83] So the Regulations now prevented the "village" third from further growth?

Today these May Regulations are portrayed as a decisive and irrevocably repressive boundary of Russian history. A Jewish author writes: this was the first push toward emigration! – first "internal" migration, then massive overseas migration.[84] – The first cause of Jewish emigration was the "Ignatiev Temporary Regulations, which violently threw around one million Jews out of the hamlets and villages, and into the towns and shtetls of the Jewish Pale."[85]

Wait a second, how did they throw the Jews out and an entire million at that? Didn't they apparently only prevent new arrivals? No, no! It was already picked up and sent rolling: that from 1882 the Jews were not only forbidden to live in the villages everywhere, but in all the cities, too, except in the 13 guberniyas; that they were moved back to the shtetls of "the Pale" – that is why the mass emigration of Jews from Russia began![86]

Well, set the record straight. The first time the idea about Jewish emigration from Russia to America voiced was as early as in 1869 at the Conference of the Alliance (of the World Jewish Union) – with the thought that the first who settled there with the help of the Alliance and local Jews "would become a magnet for their Russian co-religionists."[87] Moreover, "the beginning of the emigration [of Jews from Russia] dates back to the mid-19th Century and gains significant momentum… after the pogroms of 1881. But only since the mid-1890s does emigration become a major phenomenon of Jewish economic life, assuming a massive scale" [88] - note that it says economic life, not political life.

From a global viewpoint Jewish immigration into the United States in the 19th Century was part of an enormous century-long and worldwide historical process. There were three successive waves of Jewish emigration to America: first the Spanish-Portuguese (Sephardic) wave, then the German wave (from Germany and Austria-Hungary), and only then from Eastern Europe and Russia (Ashkenazik).[89] For reasons not addressed here, a major historical movement of Jewish emigration to the U.S. took place in the 19th Century, and not only from Russia. In light of the very lengthy Jewish history, it is difficult to overestimate the significance of this emigration.

And from the Russian Empire "a river of Jewish emigration went from all the guberniyas that made up the Jewish Pale of Settlement; but Poland, Lithuania, and Byelorussia gave the greatest number of emigrants";[90] meaning they did not come from Ukraine, which was just experiencing the pogroms. The reason for this was this emigration was the same throughout - overcrowding, which created inter-Jewish economic competition. Moreover, relying on Russian state statistics, V. Tel'nikov turns our attention to the last two decades of the 19th Century; just after the pogroms of 1881 – 1882, comparing the resettlement of Jews from the Western Krai, where there were no pogroms, to the Southwest, where they were. The latter was numerically not less and was possibly more than the Jewish departure out of Russia.[91] In addition, in 1880, according to official data, 34,000 Jews lived in the internal guberniyas, while seventeen years later (according to the census of 1897) there were already 315,000 – a nine-fold increase.[92]

Of course, the pogroms of 1881 – 1882 caused a shock but was it really a shock for the whole of Ukraine? For example, Sliozberg writes: "The 1881 pogroms did not alarm the Jews in Poltava, and soon they forgot about them." In the 1880s in Poltava "the Jewish youth did not know about the existence of the Jewish Question, and in general, did not feel isolated from the Russian youth."[93] The pogroms of 1881 – 82, in their complete suddenness, could have seemed unrepeatable, and the unchanging Jewish economic pull was prevailing: go settle hither, where less Jews live.

But undoubtedly and inarguably, a decisive turn of progressive and educated Jewry away from the hopes of a complete integration with the nation of "Russia" and the Russian population began in 1881. G. Aronson even concluded hastily, that "the 1871 Odessa Pogrom" "shattered the illusions of assimilation."[94] No, it wasn't that way yet! But if, for example, we follow the biographies of prominent and educated Russian Jews, then around 1881 – 1882 we will note in many of them a drastic change in their attitudes toward Russia and about possibilities of complete assimilation. By then it was already clear and not contested that the pogrom wave was indubitably spontaneous without any evidence for the complicity of the authorities. On the contrary, the involvement of the revolutionary narodniks was proven. However, the Jews did not forgive the Russian Government for these pogroms - and never have since. And although the pogroms originated mainly with the Ukrainian population, the Russians have not been forgiven and the pogroms have always been tied with the name of Russia.

"The pogroms of the 1880s … sobered many [of the advocates] of assimilation" (but not all: the idea of assimilation still remained alive). And here, other Jewish publicists moved to the other extreme: in general it was impossible for Jews to live among other peoples, [for] they will always be looked upon as alien. And the "Palestinian Movement… began…'to grow quickly.'"[95]

It was under the influence of the 1881 pogroms that the Odessa doctor, Lev Pinsker, published his brochure, Auto-Emancipation. The Appeal of a Russian Jew to his Fellow Tribesmen (in Berlin in 1882, and anonymously). "It made a huge impression on Russian and West European Jewry." It was an appeal about the ineradicable foreignness of Jews in eyes of surrounding peoples.[96] We will discuss this further in Chapter 7.

P. Aksel'rod claims that it was then that radical Jewish youths discovered that Russian society would not accept them as their own and thus they began to depart from the revolutionary movement. However, this assertion appears to be too far-fetched. In the revolutionary circles, except the Narodnaya Vol'ya, they did always thnik of the Jews as their own.

However, despite the cooling of attitudes of the Jewish intelligentsia toward assimilation, the government, as a result of inertia from Alexander II's reign, for a while maintained a sympathetic attitude toward the Jewish problem and did not yet fully replace it by a harshly-

restrictive approach. After the year-long ministerial activities of Count Ignatiev, who experienced such persistent opposition on the Jewish Question from liberal forces in the upper governmental spheres, an Imperial "High Commission for Revision of the Active Laws about the Jews in the Empire" was established in the beginning of 1883 – or as it was named for its chairman, Count Palen – "The Palenskaya Commission" (so that by then, it became the tenth such 'Jewish Committee'). It consisted of fifteen to twenty individuals from the upper administration, members of ministerial councils, department directors (some were members of great families, such as Bestuzhev-Ryumin, Golytsin, and Speranskiy), and it also included seven "Jewish experts" – influential financiers, including Baron Goratsiy Gintsburg and Samuil Polyakov, and prominent public figures, such as Ya. Gal'pern, physiologist and publicist N. Bakst ("it is highly likely that the favorable attitude of the majority of the members of the Commission toward resolution of the Jewish Question was caused, to certain degree, by the influence" of Bakst), and Rabbi A. Drabkin.[97] In large part, it was these Jewish experts who prepared the materials for the Commission's consideration.

The majority of the Palenskaya Commission expressed the conviction, that "the final goal of legislation concerning the Jews [should be] nothing other than its abolition," that "there is only one outcome and only one path: the path of liberation and unification of the Jews with the whole population, under the protection of the same laws."[98] (Indeed, rarely in Russian legislation did such complicated and contradictory laws pile up as the laws about Jews that accumulated over the decades: 626 statutes by 1885! And they were still added later and in the Senate they constantly researched and interpreted their wording…). And even if the Jews did not perform their duties as citizens in equal measure with others, nevertheless it was impossible to "deprive the Jew of those fundamentals, on which his existence was based – his equal rights as a subject." Agreeing "that several aspects of internal Jewish life require reforming and that certain Jewish activities constituted exploitation of the surrounding population," the majority of the Commission condemned the system of "repressive and exclusionary measures." The Commission set as the legislative goal "to equalize the rights of Jews, with those of all other subjects," although it recommended "the utmost caution and gradualness" with this.[99]

Practically, however, the Commission only succeeded in carrying out a partial mitigation of the restrictive laws. Its greatest efforts were directed of the Temporary Regulations of 1882, particularly in regard to the renting of land by Jews. The Commission made the argument as if in the defense of the landowners, not the Jews: prohibiting Jews to rent manorial lands not only impedes the development of agriculture, but also leads to a situation when certain types of agriculture remain in complete idleness in the Western Krai – to the loss of the landowners as there is nobody to whom they could lease them. However, the Minister of Interior Affairs, D.A. Tolstoy, agreed with the minority of the Commission: the prohibition against new land-leasing transactions would not be repealed.[100]

The Palenskaya Commission lasted for five years, until 1888, and in its work the liberal majority always clashed with the conservative minority. From the beginning, "Count Tolstoy certainly had no intention to revise the laws to increase the repressive measures," and the 5-year existence of the Palenskaya Commission confirms this. At that moment "His Majesty [also] did not wish to influence the decisions of his government on the matter of the increase of repressions against Jews." Ascending to the throne at such a dramatic moment, Alexander III did not hasten either to replace liberal officials, nor to choose a harsh political course: for long time he carefully examined things. "In the course of the entire reign of Alexander III, the question about a general revision of the legislation about the Jews remained open."[101] But by 1886-87, His Majesty's view already leaned toward hardening of the partial restrictions on the Jews and so the work of the Commission did not produce any visible result.

One of the first motivations for stricter control or more constraint on the Jews than during his father's reign was the constant shortfall of Jewish conscripts for military service; it was particularly noticeable when compared to conscription of Christians. According to the Charter of 1874, which abolished recruiting, compulsory military service was now laid on all citizens, without any difference in social standing, but with the stipulation that those unfit for service would be replaced: Christians with Christians, and Jews with Jews. In the case of Jews there were difficulties in implementation of that rule as there were both straightforward emigration of conscripts and their evasion which all benefited from great confusion and negligence in the official records on Jewish population, in the keeping of vital statistics, in the reliability of information about the family situation and exact place of residence of conscripts. (The tradition of all these uncertainties stretched back to the times of the Qahals (a theocratic organizational structure that originated in ancient Israelite society), and was consciously maintained for easing the tax burden.) "In 1883 and 1884, there were many occasions when Jewish recruits, contrary to the law, were arrested simply upon suspicion that they might disappear."[102] (This method was first applied to Christian recruits, but sporadically). In some places they began to demand photographs from the Jewish recruits - a very unusual requirement for that time. And in 1886 a "highly constraining" law was issued, "about several measures for providing for regular fulfillment of military conscription by Jews," which established a "300-ruble fine from the relatives of each Jew who evaded military call-up."[103] "From 1887 they stopped allowing Jews to apply for the examination for officer rank [educated soldiers had privileges in choosing military specialty in the course of service]."[104] (During the reign of Alexander II, the Jews could serve in the officers' ranks.) But officer positions in military medicine always remained open to Jews.

Yet if we consider that in the same period up to 20 million other "aliens" of the Empire were completely freed from compulsory military service, then wouldn't it be better to free the Jews of it altogether, thus offsetting their other constraints with such a privilege? … Or was it the legacy of the idea of Nicholas I continuing here – to graft the Jews into Russian society through military service? To occupy the idle?"

At the same time, Jews on the whole flocked into institutions of learning. From 1876 to 1883, the number of Jews in gymnasiums and gymnasium preparatory schools almost doubled, and from 1878 to 1886 – for an 8-year period – the number of Jewish students in the universities increased six times and reached 14.5%.[105] By the end of the reign of Alexander II they were receiving alarming complaints from the regional authorities about this. Thus, in 1878 the Governor of the Minsk Guberniya reported, "that being wealthier, the Jews can bring up their children better than the Russians; that the material condition of the Jewish pupils is better than that of Christians, and therefore in order that the Jewish element does not overwhelm the remaining population, it is necessary to introduce a quota system for the admission of Jews into secondary schools."[106] Next, after disturbances in several southern gymnasiums in 1880, the Trustee of the Odessa School District publicly came out with a similar idea. And in 1883 and 1885 two successive Novorossiysk (Odessa) General-Governors stated that an "over-filling of learning institutions with Jews" was taking place there, and it is either necessary "to limit the number of Jews in the gymnasiums and gymnasium preparatory schools" to 15% "of the general number of pupils," or "to a fairer norm, equal to the proportion of the Jewish population to the whole."[107] (By 1881, Jews made up 75% of the general number of pupils in several gymnasiums of the Odessa District.[108]) In 1886, a report was made by the Governor of Kharkov Guberniya, "complaining about the influx of Jews to the common schools."[109]

In all these instances, the ministers did not deem it possible to adopt general restrictive solutions, and only directed the reports for consideration to the Palenskaya Commission, where they did not receive support.

From the 1870s students become primary participants in the revolutionary excitement. After the assassination of Alexander II, the general intention to put down the revolutionary movement could not avoid student "revolutionary nests" (and the senior classes of the gymnasiums were already supplying them). Within the government there arose the alarming connection that together with the increase of Jews among the students, the participation of students in the revolutionary movement noticeably increased. Among the higher institutions of learning, the Medical-Surgical Academy (later the Military-Medical Academy) was particularly revolutionized. Jews were very eager to enter it and the names of Jewish students of this academy began already appearing in the court trials of the 1870s.

And so the first special restrictive measure of 1882 restricted Jewish admissions to the Military-Medical Academy to an upper limit of 5%.

In 1883, a similar order followed with respect to the Mining Institute; and in 1884 a similar quota was established at the Institute of Communications.[110] In 1885, the admission of Jews to the Kharkov Technological Institute was limited to 10%, and in 1886 their admission to the Kharkov Veterinary Institute was completely discontinued, since "the city of Kharkov was always a center of political agitation, and the residence of Jews there in more or less significant numbers is generally undesirable and even dangerous."[111]

Thus, they thought to weaken the crescendo of revolutionary waves.

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Chapter 6

In the Russian Revolutionary Movement

In the Russia of the 60–70s of the nineteenth century, when reforms moved rapidly, there were no economic or social motives for a far-reaching revolutionary movement. Yet it was indeed under Alexander II, from the beginning of his reforming work, that this movement was born, as the prematurely-ripened fruit of ideology: in 1861 there were student demonstrations in Saint Petersburg; in 1862, violent fires of criminal origin in Saint Petersburg as well, and the sanguinary proclamation of Young Russia* (*Molodaia Rossiia*); in 1866, Karakozov's** gunshot, the prodromes of the terrorist era, half a century in advance.

And it was also under Alexander II, when the restrictions on the rights of the Jews were so relaxed, that Jewish names appeared among the revolutionaries. Neither in the circles of Stankyevich***, Herzen**** and Ogariov***** nor in that of Petrachevsky, there had been only one Jew. (We do not speak here of Poland.) But at the student demonstrations of 1861 Mikhoels, Outine* and Guen will participate. And we shall find Outine in the circle of Nechayev**.

The participation of the Jews in the Russian revolutionary movement must get our attention; indeed, radical revolutionary action became a more and more widespread form of activity among Jewish youth. The Jewish revolutionary movement is a qualitatively important component of the Russian revolutionary movement in general. As for the ratio of Jewish and Russian revolutionaries over the years, it surprises us. Of course, if in the following pages we speak mainly of Jews, this in no way implies that there was not a large number of influential revolutionaries among the Russians: our focus is warranted by the subject of our study.

In fact, until the early 70s, only a very small number of Jews had joined the revolutionary movement, and in secondary roles at that. (In part, no doubt, because there were still very few Jews among the students.) One learns, for example, that Leon Deutsch at the age of ten was outraged about Karakozov's gunshot because he felt "patriotic". Similarly, few Jews adhered to the Russian nihilism of the 60s that, nevertheless, by their rationalism, they assimilated easily. "Nihilism has played an even more beneficial role in Jewish student youth than in Christian youth."[1]

However, as early as the early 70s, the circle of young Jews of the rabbinical school in Vilnius began to play an important role. (Among them, V. Yokhelson, whom we mention later, and the well-known terrorist A. Zundelevich—both brilliant pupils, destined to be excellent rabbis, A. Liebermann, future editor of *La Pravda* of Vienna, and Anna Einstein, Maxim Romm, Finkelstein.) This circle was influential because it was in close contact with the "smugglers"*** and permitted clandestine literature, as well as illegal immigrants themselves, to cross the border.[2]

It was in 1868, after high school, that Mark Natanson entered the Academy of Medicine and Surgery (which would become the Academy of Military Medicine). He will be an organiser and a leading figure in the revolutionary movement. Soon, with the young student Olga Schleisner, his future wife (whom Tikhomirov calls "the second Sophia Perovskaya", although at the time she was rather the first **), he laid the foundations of a system of so-called "pedagogical" circles, that is to say of propaganda ("*preparatory*, cultural and revolutionary work with intellectual youth"[3]) in several large cities. (These circles were wrongly dubbed "Tchaikovskyists", named after one of their less influential members, N.V. Tchaikovsky.) Natanson distinguished himself very quickly and resolutely from the circle of Nechayev (and he did not hesitate, subsequently, to present his views to the examining magistrate). In 1872 he went to Zurich with Pierre Lavrov, the principal representative of the "current of pacific propaganda"*, which rejected the rebellion; Natanson wanted to establish a permanent revolutionary organ there. In the same year he was sent to Shenkursk in close exile and, through the intercession of his father-in-law, the father of Olga Schleiser, he was transferred to Voronezh, then Finland, and finally released to Saint Petersburg. He found there nothing but discouragement, dilapidation, inertia. He endeavoured to visit the disunited groups, to connect them, to weld them, and thus founded the first Land and Freedom organisation and spending hundreds of thousands of Rubles.

Among the principal organisers of Russian populism, Natanson is the most eminent revolutionary. It was in his wake that the famous Leon Deutsch appeared; As for the ironclad populist Alexander Mikhailov, he was a disciple of "Mark the Wise". Natanson knew many revolutionaries personally. Neither an orator nor a writer, he was a born organiser, endowed with an astonishing quality: he did not regard opinions and ideology, he did not enter into any theoretical discussions with anyone, he was in accord with all tendencies (with the exception of the extremist positions of Tkachev, Lenin's predecessor), placed each and everyone where they could be useful. In those years when Bakunin supporters and Lavrov supporters were irreconcilable, Natanson proposed to put an end to "discussions about the music of the future" and to focus instead on the real needs of the cause. It was he who, in the summer of 1876, organised the sensational escape of Piotr Kropotkin * on the "Barbarian", that half-blood who would often be spoken of. In December of the same year, he conceived and set up the first public meeting in front of the Cathedral of Our Lady of Kazan, at the end of the Mass, on the day of Saint Nicholas: all the revolutionaries gathered there and for the first time, the red flag of Land and Liberty was displayed. Natanson was arrested in 1877, sentenced to three years' detention, then relegated to Yakutia and dismissed from revolutionary action until 1890.[4]

There were a number of Jews in the circle of "Tchaikovskyists" in Saint Petersburg as well as in its branches in Moscow, Kiev, Odessa. (In Kiev, notably, P.B. Axelrod, whom we have already mentioned, the future Danish publisher and diplomat Grigori Gurevitch, future teachers Semion Lourie and Leiser Lœwenthal, his brother Nahman Lœwenthal, and the two Kaminer sisters.) As for the first Nihilist circle of Leon Deutsch in Kiev, it was "constituted exclusively of young Jewish students"[5]. After the demonstration in front of the Cathedral of Our Lady of Kazan, three Jews were tried, but not Natanson himself. At the trial of the "fifty"[*] which took place in the summer of 1877 in Moscow, several Jews were charged for spreading propaganda among factory workers. At the trial of the "one hundred and ninety-three[**]", there were thirteen Jews accused. Among the early populists, we can also cite Lossif Aptekman and Alexander Khotinsky, who were highly influential.[6]

Natanson's idea was that revolutionaries should involve the people (peasants) and be for them like lay spiritual guides. This "march to the people", which has become so famous since then, began in 1873 in the "dolgushinian" circle (Dolgushin, Dmokhovsky, Gamov, etc.) where no Jews were counted. Later, the Jews also "went to the people." (The opposite also happened: in Odessa, P. Axelrod tried to attract Jeliabov[***] in a secret revolutionary organisation, but he refused: at the time, he was still a Kulturtrasser.) In the mid-70s, there were only about twenty of these "populists", all or almost all Lavrov and not Bakunin. (Only the most extreme were listening to calls for the insurrection of Bakunin, such as Deutsch, who, with the help of Stefanovitch, had raised the "Tchiguirine revolt[****]" by having pushed the peasants into thinking that the tsar, surrounded by the enemy, had the people saying: turn back all these authorities, seize the land, and establish a regime of freedom!)

It is interesting to note that almost no Jewish revolutionary launched into the revolution because of poverty, but most of them came from wealthy families. (In the three volumes of the *Russian Jewish Encyclopædia* there is no shortage of examples.) Only Paul Axelrod came from a very poor family, and, as we have already said, he had been sent by the *Kahal* to an institution solely to supplement the established quota. (From there, very naturally, he entered the gymnasium of Mogilev, then the high school of Nejine.) Came from wealthy merchant environments: Natanson, Deutsch, Aptekman (whose family had many Talmudists, doctors of the law—including all his uncles. Khotinsky, Gurevitch, Semion Lourie (whose family, even in this milieu, was considered "aristocratic", "little Simon was also destined to be a rabbi", but under the influence of the Enlightenment, his father, Gerts Lourie, had entrusted his son to college to become a professor); the first Italian Marxist, Anne Rosenstein (surrounded from childhood by governesses speaking several languages), the tragic figures of Moses Rabinovitch and Betty Kaminskaya, Felicie Cheftel, Joseph Guetsov, member of the Black Repartition, among many others. And then again Khrystyna (Khasia) Grinberg, "of a wealthy traditionalist merchant family", who in 1880 joined the Will of the People: her dwelling housed clandestine meetings, she was an accomplice in the attacks on Alexander II, and even became in 1882 the owner of a clandestine dynamite factory—then was condemned to deportation.[7] Neither did Fanny Moreinis come from a poor family; she also "participated in the preparations of attacks against the Emperor Alexander II", and spent two years in the prison of Kara.[8] Some came from families of rabbis, such as the future doctor of philosophy Lioubov Axelrod or Ida Axelrod. There were also families of the petty *bourgeoisie*, but wealthy enough to put their children through college, such as

Aizik Aronchik (after college, he entered the School of Engineers of Saint Petersburg, which he soon abandoned to embark in revolutionary activities), Alexander Bibergal, Vladimir Bogoraz, Lazarus Goldenberg, the Lœwenthal brothers. Often, mention is made in the biographies of the aforementioned, of the Academy of Military Medicine, notably in those of Natanson, Bibergal, Isaac Pavlovsky (future counterrevolutionary[*]), M. Rabinovitch, A. Khotinsky, Solomon Chudnovsky, Solomon Aronson (who happened to be involved in these circles), among others.[9]

Therefore it was not material need that drove them, but the strength of their convictions.

It is not without interest to note that in these Jewish families the adhesion of young people to the revolution has rarely—or not at all—provoked a break between "fathers and sons", between parents and their children. "The 'fathers' did not go after the 'sons' very much, as was then the case in Christian families. (Although Gesya Gelfman had to leave her family, a traditional Old Alliance family, in secret.) The "fathers" were often very far from opposing their children. Thus Guerz Lourie, as well as Isaac Kaminer, a doctor from Kiev: the whole family participated in the revolutionary movement of the 70s, and himself, as a "sympathiser…, rendered great service" to the revolutionaries; three of them became the husbands of his daughters. (In the 1990s, he joined the Zionist movement and became the friend of Achad-Haam.[10**])

Neither can we attribute anti-Russian motivations to these early Jewish revolutionaries, as some do in Russia today. In no way!

It all began with the same "nihilism" of the 60s. "Having initiated itself to Russian education and to 'goy' culture", having been imbued with Russian literature, "Jewish youth was quick to join the most progressive movement of the time", nihilism, and with an ease all the greater as it broke with the prescriptions of the past. Even "the most fanatical of the students of a *yeshiva*, immersed in the study of the Talmud," after "two or three minutes of conversation with a nihilist", broke with the "patriarchal mode of thought". "He [the Jew, even pious] had only barely grazed the surface of 'goy' culture, he had only carried out a breach in his vision of the traditional world, but already he was able to go far, very far, to the extremes." These young men were suddenly gripped by the great universal ideals, dreaming of seeing all men become brothers and all enjoying the same prosperity. The task was sublime: to liberate mankind from misery and slavery![11]

And there played the role of Russian literature. Pavel Axelrod, in high school, had as his teachers Turgenev, Bielinsky, Dobrolyubov (and later Lassalle[*] who would make him turn to the revolution). Aptekman was fond of Chernyshevsky, Dobrolyubov, Pissarev (and also Bukle). Lazare Goldenberg, too, had read and re-read Dobrolyubov, Chernyshevsky, Pissarev, Nekrasov—and Rudin[**], who died on the barricades, was his hero. Solomon Tchudnovsky, a great admirer of Pissarev, wept when he died. The nihilism of Semion Lourie was born of Russian literature, he had fed on it. This was the case for a very large number—the list would be too long.

But today, a century later, there are few who remember the atmosphere of those years. No serious political action was taking place in the "street of the Jews", as it was then called, while, in the "Street of the Russians", populism was rising. It was quite simple: it was enough to "sink, and merge into the movement of Russian liberation"[12]! Now this fusion was more easily facilitated, accelerated by Russian literature and the writings of radical publicists.

By turning to the Russian world, these young people turned away from the Jewish world. "Many of them conceived hostility and disdain to the Judaism of their fathers, just like towards a parasitic anomaly."[13] In the 70s "there were small groups of radical Jewish youths who, in the name of the ideals of populism, moved more and more away from their people…, began to assimilate vigorously and to appropriate the Russian national spirit."[14] Until the mid-70s, the socialist Jews did not consider it necessary to do political work with their fellow men, because, they thought, the Jews have never possessed land and thus cannot assimilate socialist ideas. The Jews never had peasants of their own. "None of the Jewish revolutionaries of the 70s could conceive of the idea of acting for one's own nation alone." It was clear that one only acted in the dominant language and only for the Russian peasants. "For us… there were no Jewish workers. We looked at them with the eyes of russifiers: the Jew must assimilate completely with the native population"; even artisans were regarded as potential exploiters, since they had apprentices and employees. In fact, Russian workers

and craftsmen were not accorded any importance as an autonomous class: they existed only as future socialists who would facilitate work in the peasant world.[15]

Assimilation once accepted, these young people, by their situation, naturally tended towards radicalism, having lost on this new soil the solid conservative roots of their former environment.

"We were preparing to go to the people and, of course, to the Russian people. We deny the Jewish religion, like any other religion; we considered our jargon an artificial language, and Hebrew a dead language… We were sincere assimilators and we saw in the Russian education and culture salvation for the Jews… Why then did we seek to act among the Russian people, not the Jewish people? It comes from the fact that we had become strangers to the spiritual culture of the Jews of Russia and that we rejected their thinkers who belonged to a traditionalist *bourgeoisie*… from the ranks of which we had left ourselves… We thought that, when the Russian people would be freed from the despotism and yoke of the ruling classes, the economic and political freedom of all the peoples of Russia, including the Jewish people, would arise. And it must be admitted that Russian literature has also somewhat inculcated the idea that the Jewish people were not a people but a parasitic class."[16]

Also came into play the feeling of *debt* owed to the people of Great Russia, as well as "the faith of the populist rebels in the imminence of a popular insurrection."[17] In the 70s, "the Jewish intellectual youth… 'went to the people' in the hope of launching, with its feeble hands, the peasant revolution in Russia."[18] As Aptekman writes, Natanson, "like the hero of the *Mtsyri* of Lermontov,

> Knew the hold of only one thought,
> lived only one, but burning passion.

This thought was the happiness of the people; this passion, the struggle for liberation."[19] Aptekman himself, as depicted by Deutsch, was "emaciated, of small stature, pale complexion," "with very pronounced national features"; having become a village nurse, he announced socialism to the peasants through the Gospel.[20]

It was a little under the influence of their predecessors, the members of the Dolgouchin circle, whom inscribed on the branches of the crucifix: "In the name of Christ, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," and almost all preached the Gospel, that the first Jewish populists turned to Christianity, which they used as a support point and as an instrument. Aptekman writes about himself: "I have converted to Christianity by a movement from the heart and love for Christ."[21] (Not to be confused with the motives of Tan Bogoraz, who in the 80s had converted to Christianity "to escape the vexations of his Jewish origin."[22] Nor with the feint of Deutsch who went to preach the molokanes[*] by presenting himself as a 'good orthodox'.") But, adds Aptekman, "in order to give oneself to the people, there is no need to repent": with regard to the Russian people, "I had no trace of repentance. Moreover, where could it have come from? Is it not rather for me, the descendant of an oppressed nation, to demand the settlement of this dealing, instead of paying the repayment of some, I am not sure which, fantastic loan? Nor have I observed this feeling of repentance among my comrades of the nobility who were walking with me on the same path."[23]

Let us note in this connection that the idea of a rapprochement between the desired socialism and historical Christianity was not unconnected with many Russian revolutionaries at the time, and as justification for their action, and as a convenient tactical procedure. V. V. Flerovsky[**] wrote: "I always had in mind the comparison between this youth who was preparing for action and the first Christians." And, immediately after, the next step: "By constantly turning this idea into my head, I have come to the conviction that we will reach our goal only by one means—*by creating a new religion*… It is necessary to teach the people to devote all their forces to oneself exclusively… I wanted to create *the religion of brotherhood*"— and the young disciples of Flerovsky tried to "lead the experiment by wondering how a religion that would have neither God nor saints would be received by the people."

His disciple Gamov, from the circle of Dolgouchine, wrote even more crudely: "We must invent a religion that would be against the tsar and the government… We must write a catechism and prayers in this spirit."[24]

The revolutionary action of the Jews in Russia is also explained in another way. We find it exposed and then refuted by A. Srebrennikov: “There is a view that if, through the reforms of the years 1860–1863, the ‘Pale of Settlement’ had been abolished, our whole history would have unfolded otherwise… If Alexander II had abolished the ‘Pale of Settlement’, there would have been neither the Bund* nor Trotskyism!” Then he mentioned the internationalist and socialist ideas that flowed from the West, and wrote: “If the suppression of the Pale of Settlement had been of capital importance to them, all their struggle would have stretched towards it. Now they were occupied with everything else: they dreamed of overthrowing tsarism!”[25]

And, one after the other, driven by the same passion, they abandoned their studies (notably the Academy of Military Medicine) to “go to the people”. Every diploma was marked with the seal of infamy as a means of exploitation of the people. They renounced any career, and some broke with their families. For them, “every day not put to good use [constitutes] an irreparable loss, criminal for the realisation of the well-being and happiness of the disinherited masses.”[26]

But in order to “go to the people”, it was necessary to “make oneself simple”, both internally, for oneself, and practically, “to inspire confidence to the masses of the people, one had to infiltrate it under the guise of a workman or a *moujik*.”[27] However, writes Deutsch, how can you go to the people, be heard and be believed, when you are betrayed by your language, your appearance and your manners? And still, to seduce the listeners, you must throw jokes and good words in popular language! And we must also be skilful in the work of the fields, so painful to townspeople. For this reason, Khotinsky worked on the farm with his brother, and worked there as a ploughman. The Lœwenthal brothers learned shoemaking and carpentry. Betty Kamenskaya entered as a worker in a spinning mill to a very hard position. Many became caregivers. (Deutsch writes that, on the whole, other activities were better suited to these revolutionary Jews: work within factions, conspiracy, communications, typography, border-crossing.)[28]

The “march to the people” began with short visits, stays of a few months—a “fluid” march. At first, they relied only on the work of agitation. It was imagined that it would suffice to convince the peasants to open their eyes to the regime in power and the exploitation of the masses, and to promise that the land and the instruments of production would become the property of all.

In fact, this whole “march to the people” of the populists ended in failure. And not only because of some inadvertent gunshot directed against the Tsar (Solovyov, 1879), which obliged them all to flee the country and to hide very far from the cities. But above all because the peasants, perfectly deaf to their preaching, were even sometimes ready to hand them over to the authorities. The populists, the Russians (hardly more fortunate) like the Jews, lost “the faith… in a spontaneous revolutionary will and in the socialist instincts of the peasantry”, and “transformed into impenitent pessimists.”[29]

Clandestine action, however, worked better. Three residents of Minsk, Lossif Guetsov, Saul Levkov, and Saul Grinfest, succeeded in setting up a clandestine press in their city that would serve the country as a whole. It survived until 1881. It was there that was printed in gold letters the leaflet on “the execution of Alexander II”. It printed the newspaper *The Black Repartition**, and then the proclamations of The Will of the People. Deutsche referred to them as “peaceful propagandists”. Apparently, the term “peaceful” embraced everything that was not bombing—smuggling, illegal border-crossing, and even the call to avoid paying taxes (appeal to the peasants of Lazare Goldenberg).

Many of these Jewish revolutionaries were heavily condemned (heavily, even by the measures of our time). Some benefited from a reduction of their punishment—like Semion Lourie, thanks to his father who obtained for him a less severe regime in prison. There was also public opinion, which leaned towards indulgence. Aptekman tells us that in 1881—after the assassination of Alexander II—“they lived relatively freely in the prison of Krasnoyarsk” where “the director of the prison, a real wild beast, was suddenly tamed and gave us all kinds of permissions to contact the deportees and our friends.” Then “we were received in transit prisons not as detainees, but as noble captives”; “the prison director came in, accompanied by soldiers carrying trays with tea, biscuits, jam for everyone, and, as a bonus, a small glass of vodka. Was it not idyllic? We were touched.”[30]

The biographies of these early populists reveal a certain exaltation, a certain lack of mental equilibrium. Leo Deutsch testifies: Leon Zlatopolsky, a terrorist, “was not a mentally balanced person”. Aptekman himself, in his cell, after his arrest, “was not far from madness, as his nerves were shaken.” Betty Kamenskaya, “… from the second month of detention… lost her mind”; she was transferred to the hospital, then her father, a merchant, took her back on bail. Having read in the indictment that she would not be brought before the court, she wanted to tell the prosecutor that she was in good health and could appear, but soon after, she swallowed poison and died.[31] Moses Rabinovitch, in his cell, “had hallucinations… his nerves were exhausted”; he resolved to feign repentance, to *name* those whom the instruction was surely already acquainted with, in order to be liberated. He drew up a declaration promising to say everything he knew and even, upon his release from prison, to seek and transmit information. The result was that he confessed everything without being released and that he was sent to the province of Irkutsk where he went mad and died “barely over the age of 20.” Examples of this kind are not lacking. Leiser Tsukerman, immigrated to New York, and put an end to his life. Nahman Lœwenthal, after having immigrated to Berlin, “was sent into the dizzying downward spiral of a nervous breakdown,” to which was added an unhappy love; “he swallowed sulphuric acid and threw himself into the river”—at the age of about 19.[32] These young individuals had thrown themselves away by overestimating their strength and the resistance of their nerves.

And even Grigori Goldenberg, who, in cold blood, had defeated the governor of Kharkov and asked his comrades, as a supreme honor, to kill by his own hand the Tsar (but his comrades, fearing popular anger, had apparently dismissed him as a Jew; apparently, this argument often prompted populists to designate most often Russians, to perpetrate attacks): after being arrested while carrying a charge of dynamite, he was seized by unbearable anguish in his cell of the Troubetskoy bastion, his spirit was broken, he made a full confession that affected the whole movement, petitioned that Aaron Zundelevich come share his cell (who showed more indulgence than others towards his actions). When it was refused, he committed suicide.[33]

Others, who were not directly involved, suffered, such as Moses Edelstein, who was by no means an ideologist, who had “slipped”, for a price, clandestine literature; he suffered much in prison, prayed to Yahweh for himself and his family: he repented during the judgment: “I did not imagine that there could be such bad books.” Or S. Aronson who, after the trial of the “one hundred and ninety-three”, disappeared completely from the revolutionary scene.[34]

Another point is worthy of noting; it was the facility with which many of them left that Russia which they had long ago intended to save. In fact, in the 70s emigration was regarded as desertion in revolutionary circles: even if the police seek you, go underground, but do not run away![35]—Tan Bogoraz left to live twenty years in New York.—Lazar Goldenberg-Getroitman also “left to New York in 1885, where he gave classes on the history of the revolutionary movement in Russia”; he returned to Russia in 1906, after the amnesty, to leave again rather quickly to Britain, where he remained until his death.”[36]—In London, one of the Vayner brothers became the owner of a furniture workshop and Mr. Aronson and Mr. Romm became Clinical Doctors in New York.—After a few years in Switzerland, I. Guetsov went to live in America, having radically broken with the Socialist movement.—Leiser Lœwenthal, emigrated to Switzerland, completed his medical studies in Geneva, became the assistant of a great physiologist before obtaining a chair of histology in Lausanne.—Semion Lourie also finished his studies in a faculty of medicine in Italy, but died shortly after. —Liubov Axelrod (“the Orthodox”[*]) remained for a long time in immigration, where he received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Berlin (later he inculcated dialectical materialism to students of Soviet graduate schools.) A. Khotinsky also entered the Faculty of Medicine of Bern (but died the following year from a galloping consumption). Grigory Gurayev made a fine career in Denmark; he returned to Russia as the country’s ambassador in Kiev, where he stayed until 1918.[37]

All this also shows how many talented men there were among these revolutionaries. Men such as these, endowed with such lively intelligence, when they found themselves in Siberia, far from wasting or losing their reason, they opened their eyes to the tribes which surrounded them, studied their languages and their customs, and wrote ethnographic studies about them: Leon Sternberg on the Ghiliaks,[**] Tan-Bogoraz on the Tchouktches,[***] Vladimir Yokhelson on the Yukaghirs,[****] and Naoum Guekker on the physical type of the lakuts.[38*****] Some studies on the Buryats[******] are due to Moses Krohl.

Some of these Jewish revolutionaries willingly joined the socialist movement in the West. Thus V. Yokhelson and A. Zundelevich, during the Reichstag elections in Germany, campaigned on the side of the Social Democrats. Zundelevich was even arrested for having used fraudulent methods. Anne Rosenstein, in France, was convicted for organising a street demonstration in defiance of the regulations governing traffic on the street; Turgenev intervened for her and she was expelled to Italy where she was twice condemned for anarchist agitation (she later married F. Turati,[*******] converted him to socialism and became herself the first Marxist of Italy). Abram Valt-Lessine, a native of Minsk, published articles for seventeen years in New York in the socialist organ of America *Vorwarts* and exerted a great influence on the formation of the American labour movement.[39] (That road was going to be taken by many others of our Socialists…)

It sometimes happened that revolutionary emigrants were disappointed by the revolution. Thus Moses Veller, having distanced himself from the movement, succeeded, thanks to Turgenev's intervention with Loris-Melikov, to return to Russia. More extravagant was the journey of Isaac Pavlovsky: living in Paris, as "illustrious revolutionary", he had connections with Turgenev, who made him know Emile Zola and Alphonse Daudet; he wrote a novel about the Russian nihilists that Turgenev published in the *Vestnik Evropy*[*] (The Messenger of Europe), and then he became the correspondent in Paris of *Novoye Vremia*[**] "the New Times" under the pseudonym of I. Iakovlev—and even, as Deutsch writes, he portrayed himself as "anti-Semite", sent a petition in high places, was pardoned and returned to Russia.[40]

That said, the majority of the Jewish revolutionaries blended in, just like the Russians, and their track was lost. "With the exception of two or three prominent figures… all my other compatriots were minor players," writes Deutsch.[41] A Soviet collection, published the day after the revolution under the title of "Historical and Revolutionary Collection",[42] quotes many names of humble soldiers unknown to the revolution. We find there dozens, even hundreds of Jewish names. Who remembers them now? However, all have taken action, all have brought their contribution, all have shaken more or less strongly the edifice of the State.

Let us add: this very first contingent of Jewish revolutionaries did not fully join the ranks of the Russian revolution, all did not deny their Judaism. A. Liebermann, a great connoisseur of the Talmud, a little older than his populist fellow students, proposed in 1875 to carry out a specific campaign in favour of socialism among the Jewish population. With the help of G. Gurevich, he published a socialist magazine in Yiddish called *Emes* (*Pravda* = Truth) in Vienna in 1877. Shortly before, in the 70s, A. Zundelevich "undertook a publication in the Hebrew language", also entitled *Truth*. (L. Shapiro hypothesises that this publication was "the distant ancestor of Trotsky's *The Pravda*.[43] The tradition of this appellation was durable.) Some, like Valt-Lessine, insisted on the convergence of internationalism with Judaic nationalism. "In his improvised conferences and sermons, the prophet Isaiah and Karl Marx figured as authorities of equal importance."[44] In Geneva was founded the Jewish Free Typography,[45] intended to print leaflets addressed to the Jewish working-class population.

Specifically Jewish circles were formed in some cities. A "Statute for the Organisation of a Social-Revolutionary Union of the Jews of Russia", formulated at the beginning of 1876, showed the need for propaganda in the Hebrew language and even to organise between Jews of the western region "a network of social-revolutionary sections, federated with each other and with other sections of the same type found abroad". "The Socialists of the whole world formed a single brotherhood," and this organisation was to be called the Jewish Section of the Russian Social-Revolutionary Party.[46]

Hessen comments: the action of this Union among the Jewish masses "has not met with sufficient sympathies", and that is why these Jewish socialists, in their majority, "lent a hand to the common cause", that is to say, to the Russian cause.[47] In fact, circles were created in Vilnius, Grodno, Minsk, Dvinsk, Odessa, but also, for example, in Elts, Saratov, Rostov-on-Don.

In the very detailed founding act of this "Social-Revolutionary Union of all Jews in Russia", one can read surprising ideas, statements such as: "*Nothing ordinary has the right to exist* if it has no rational justification"[48] (!)

By the end of the 70s, the Russian revolutionary movement was already sliding towards terrorism. The appeal to the revolt of Bakunin had definitely prevailed over the concern for instruction of the masses of Lavrov. Beginning in 1879, the idea of populist presence among the peasants had no effect—the idea that dominated in The Will of the People—gained the upper hand over the rejection of terror by The Black Repartition. Terror, nothing but terror!!—much more: a systematic terror! (That the people did not have a voice in the matter, that the ranks of the intelligentsia were so sparse, did not disturb them.) Terrorist acts—including against the Tsar in person!—thus succeeded one another.

According to Leo Deutsch's assessment, only ten to twelve Jews took part in this growing terror, beginning with Aron Gobst (executed), Solomon Wittenberg (prepared an attack on Alexander II in 1878, executed in 1879), Aizik Aronchik (was involved in the explosion of the imperial train, condemned to a penal colony for life) and Gregory Goldenberg, already named. Like Goldenberg, A. Zundelevich—brilliant organiser of terror, but who was not given the time to participate in the assassination of the Tsar—was arrested very early. There was also another quite active terrorist: Mlodetsky. As for Rosa Grossman, Krystyna Grinberg and the brothers Leo and Saveli Zlatopolsky, they played a secondary role. (In fact, Saveli, as of March 1st, 1881*, was a member of the Executive Committee); As for Gesya Gelfman, she was part of the basic group of the "actors of March 1st."[49]

Then it was the 80s that saw the decline and dissolution of populism. Government power took over; belonging to a revolutionary organisation cost a firm eight to ten years of imprisonment. But if the revolutionary movement was caught by inertia, its members continued to exist. One can quote here Sofia Ginzburg: she did not engage in revolutionary action until 1877; she tried to restore the Will of the People, which had been decimated by arrests; she prepared, just after the Ulyanov group**, an attack on Alexander III.[50] So-and-so was forgotten in deportation, another was coming back from it, a third was only leaving for it—but they continued the battle.

Thusly was a famous deflagration described by the memorialists: the rebellion in the prison of Yakutsk in 1889. An important contingent of political prisoners had been told that they were going to be transferred to Verkhoyansk and, from there, even further, to Srednie-Kolymsk, which they wanted to avoid at all costs. The majority of the group were Jewish inmates. In addition, they were informed that the amount of baggage allowed was reduced: instead of five poods*** of books, clothes, linen, five poods also of bread and flour, two poods of meat, plus oil, sugar and tea (the whole, of course, loaded on horses or reindeer), a reduction of five poods in all. The deportees decided to resist. In fact, it had already been six months that they had been walking freely in the city of Yakutsk, and some had obtained weapons from the inhabitants. "While you're at it, might as well perish like this, and may the people discover all the abomination of the Russian government—perishing so that the spirit of combat is revived among the living!" When they were picked up to be taken to the police station, they first opened fire on the officers, and the soldiers answered with a salvo. Condemned to death, together with N. Zotov, were those who fired the first shots at the vice-governor: L. Kogan-Bernstein and A. Gausman. Condemned to forced labour in perpetuity were: the memorialist himself, O. Minor, the celebrated M. Gotz*, and also "A. Gurevitch and M. Orlov, Mr. Bramson, Mr. Braguinsky, Mr. Fundaminsky, Mr. Ufland, S. Ratine, O. Estrovitch, Sofia Gurevitch, Vera Gotz, Pauline Perly, A. Bolotina, N. Kogan-Bernstein." The *Jewish Encyclopædia* informs us that for this mutiny twenty-six Jews and six Russians were tried.[51]

That same year, 1889, Mark Natanson returned from exile and undertook to forge, in place of the old dismantled populist organisations, a new organisation called The Right of the People (*Narodnoie Pravo*). Natanson had already witnessed the emergence of Marxism in Russia, imported from Europe, and its competition with populism. He made every effort to save the revolutionary movement from decadence and to maintain ties with the Liberals ('the best liberals are also semi-socialists"). Not more than before did he look at nuances of convictions: what mattered to him was that all should unite to overthrow the autocracy, and when Russia was democratic, then it would be figured out. But the organisation he set up this time proved to be amorphous, apathetic and ephemeral. Besides, respecting the rules of the conspiracy was no longer necessary. As Isaac Gurvitch very eloquently pointed out, "because of the absence of conspiracy, a mass of people fall into the clutches of the police, but the revolutionaries are now so numerous that these losses do not count—trees are knocked down, and chips go flying!"[52]

The fracture that had occurred in the Jewish consciousness after 1881–1882 could not but be reflected somewhat in the consciousness of Jewish revolutionaries in Russia. These young men had begun by drifting away from Judaism, and many had returned to it. They had "left the 'street of the Jews' and then returned to their people": "Our entire historical

destiny is linked to the Jewish ghetto, it is from it that our national essence is forged."[53] Until the pogroms of 1881–1882, "absolutely none of us revolutionaries thought for a moment" that we should publicly explain the participation of the Jews in the revolutionary movement. But then came the pogroms, which caused "among… the majority of our countrymen an explosion of indignation." And now "it was not only the cultivated Jews, but some Jewish revolutionaries who had no affinity with their nation, who suddenly felt obliged to devote their strength and talents to their unjustly persecuted brothers."[54] "The pogroms have awakened sleeping feelings, they have made young people more susceptible to the sufferings of their people, and the people more receptive to revolutionary ideas. Let this serve as a basis for an autonomous action of the Jewish mass": "We are obstinately pursuing our goal: the destruction of the current political regime."[55]

But behold, the unexpected support to the anti-Jewish pogroms brought by the leaflets of The Will of the People! Leo Deutsch expresses his perplexity in a letter to Axelrod, who also wonders: "The Jewish question is now, in practice, really insoluble for a revolutionary. What would one do, for example, in Balta, where the Jews are being attacked? To defend them is tantamount to "arousing hatred against the revolutionaries who not only killed the Tsar, but also support the Jews"… Reconciliation propaganda is now extremely difficult for the party."[56]

This perplexity, P. L. Lavrov himself, the venerated chief, expresses it in his turn: "I recognise that the Jewish question is extremely complex, and for the party, which intends to draw itself closer to the people and raise it against the government, it is difficult in the highest degree… because of the passionate state in which the people find themselves and the need to have it *on our side*."[57] He was not the only one of the Russian revolutionaries to reason this way.

In the 80s, a current reappeared among the socialists, advocating directing attention and propaganda to specifically Jewish circles, and preferably the ones of workers. But, as proletariat, there were not many people among the Jews—some carpenters, binders, shoemakers. The easiest was certainly to act among the most educated printers. Isaac Gurvitch recounts: with Moses Khourguine, Leon Rogaller, Joseph Reznik, "in Minsk we had set ourselves the task of creating a nucleus of educated workers." But if we take, for example, Belostok or Grodno, "we found no working class": the recruitment was too weak.

The creation of these circles was not done openly; it was necessary to conspire either to organise the meeting outside the city, or to hold it in a private apartment in the city, but then systematically beginning with lessons of Russian grammar or natural sciences… and then only by recruiting volunteers to preach socialism to them. As I. Martar explains: it was these preliminary lessons that attracted people to the revolutionary circles. "Skilled and wise," capable of becoming their own masters, "those who had attended our meetings had received instruction there, and especially mastery of Russian, for language is a precious weapon in the competitive struggle of petty commerce and industry"; After that, our "lucky guys", freed from the role of hired labourers and swearing to their great gods that they themselves would never employ hired labour, had to have recourse to it, due to the requirements of the market."[58] Or, once formed in these circles, "the worker abandoned his trade and went away to take examinations 'externally'."[59]

The local Jewish *bourgeoisie* disliked the participation of young people in the revolutionary circles, for it had understood—faster and better than the police—where all of this would lead.[60]

Here and there, however, things advanced; with the aid of socialist pamphlets and proclamations provided by the printing press in London, the young revolutionaries themselves drafted "social-democrat formulations on all programmatic questions". Thus, for ten years, a slow propaganda led little by little to the creation of the Bund.

But, "even more than police persecution, it was the emerging immigration to America that hampered our work. In fact, we trained socialist workers for America." The concise recollections of Isaac Gurvitch on the first Jewish workers' circles are enamelled by obiter dicta such as: Schwartz, a student who participated in revolutionary agitation, "subsequently immigrated to America; he lives in New York".—as well, at a meeting in Joseph Reznik's apartment: "There were two workers present, a carpenter and a joiner: both are now in America." And, two pages later, we learn that Reznik himself, after his return from exile, "went to live in America." Conversely, a young man named Guirchfeld, who came from America to do revolutionary work, "is currently a doctor in Minneapolis" and was a Socialist candidate for the post of governor.—"One of the most active members of the first Abramovich circle, a certain Jacob Zvirine…,

after serving his twelve months in the Kresty prison… immigrated to America and now lives in New York.”—“Shmulevich (“Kivel”)… in 1889… was forced to flee from Russia; he lived until 1896 in Switzerland where he was an active member of the social democratic organisations”, then “he moved to America… and lives in Chicago”. Finally, the narrator himself: “In 1890 I myself left Russia,” although a few years earlier “we were considering things differently. To lead a socialist propaganda among the workers is *the obligation* of every honest educated man: it is our way of paying our “historical debt” to the people. And since I have the obligation to make propaganda, it follows very obviously that I have the right to demand that I be given the opportunity to fulfil this obligation.” Arriving in New York in 1890, Gurvich found there a “Russian workers’ association of self-development,” consisting almost exclusively of artisans from Minsk, and in order to celebrate the Russian New Year they organised in New York “The Ball of the Socialists of Minsk.”[61] In New York, “the local socialist movement… predominantly was Jewish.”[62]

As we can see, from that time the ocean did not constitute a major obstacle to the cohesion and the pursuit of the revolutionary action carried out by the Jews. This living link would have oh so striking effects in Russia.

Yet all Jewish young people had not abandoned the Russian revolutionary tradition, far from it; many even stood there in the 80s and 90s. As D. Schub shows, the pogroms and the restrictive measures of Alexander III only excited them even more strongly for combat.

Then it became necessary to explain as well as possible to the little Russian people why so many Jews participated in the revolutionary movement. Addressing uneducated people, the popular pamphlets gradually forged a whole phraseology that had its effects until 1917—including 1917. It is a booklet of this kind that allows us to reconstruct their arguments.

Hard is the fate of the Russian, the subject of the Tsar; the government holds him in his iron fist. But “still more bitter is the lot of the indigent Jew”: “the government makes fun of him, pressures him to death. His existence is only a life of famine, a long agony”, and “his brothers of misery and toil, the peasants and the Russian workers…, as long as they are in ignorance, treat him as a foreigner.” There followed, one after the other, didactic questions: “Are Jewish capitalists enemies of the working people of Russia?” The enemies are all capitalists without distinction, and it is of little importance to the working people to be plundered by such and such: one should not concentrate their anger on those who are Jews.—“The Jew has no land… he has no means to prosper. If the Jews do not devote themselves to the labour of the land, it is because “the Russian government has not allowed them to reside in the countryside”; but in their colonies they are “excellent cultivators.” The fields are superbly enhanced… by the work of their arms. They do not use any outside labour, and do not practice any extra trade… they like the hard work of the land.”—“Are destitute Jews harming the economic interests of Russian workers? If the Jews do business, “it is out of necessity, not out of taste; all other ways are closed to them, and one has to live”; “they would cease with joy to trade if they were allowed to leave their cage.” And if there are thieves among them, we must accuse the Tsarist government. “The Jewish workers began the struggle for the improvement of their condition at the time when the Russian working people were subjected. The Jewish workers “before all the others have lost patience”; “And even now tens of thousands of Jews are members of Russian Socialist parties. They spread the hatred of the capitalist system and the tsarist government through the country”; they have rendered “a proud service to the Russian working people”, and that is why Russian capitalists hate them. The government, through the police, assisted in the preparation of the pogroms; it sent the police and the army to lend a helping hand to the looters”; “Fortunately, very few workers and peasants were among them.”—“Yes, the Jewish masses hate this irresponsible tsarist government”, because “it was the will of the government that the skull of Jewish children be smashed against walls… that Jewish women, elderly and children alike, be raped in the streets. And yet, “He lies boldly, the one who treats the Jews as enemies of the Russian people… And besides, how could they hate Russia? Could they have another country?”[63]

There are amazing resurgences in the revolutionary tradition. In 1876, A. Biebergal had been convicted for taking part in the demonstration on the square in front of Our Lady of Kazan. And it was there that his eldest daughter, a student of graduate studies of Saint Petersburg, was apprehended on the same spot in Kazan on the anniversary of this demonstration, twenty-five years later, in 1901. (In 1908, Member of a group S.-R.[*], she was condemned to the penal colonies for the attack on the Grand Duke Vladimir Alexandrovich.[**])

In fact, over the years, Russian revolutionaries increasingly needed the input of the Jews; they understood more and more what advantage they derived from them—of their dual struggle: against the vexations on the plane of nationality, and against those of an economic order—as a detonator for the revolution.

In 1883, in Geneva, appears what can be considered as the head of the emerging social democracy: the "Liberation of Labour" group. Its founders were, along with Plekhanov and Vera Zasulich, L. Deutsch and P. Axelrod.[64] (When Ignatov died in 1885, he was replaced by Ingerman.)

In Russia comes to life a current that supports them. Constituted of former members of the dismantled Black Repartition (they considerably exceeded those of the Will of the People), they will be called "liberationists" (*osvobojdentsy*). Among them are a number of young Jews, among whom we can name the two best known: Israel Guelfand (the future and famous Parvus) and Raphael Soloveitchik. In 1889 Soloveitchik, who had travelled through Russia to set up revolutionary action in several cities, was arrested and tried with other members of the Liberation of Labour group, which included several Jewish names.[65] Others who belonged to this social revolutionary trend were David Goldendach, the future, well-known Bolshevik "Riazanov" (who had fled Odessa in 1889 and had taken refuge abroad to escape military service[66]).

Nevertheless, what remained of the Will of the People after its collapse was a fairly large group. Among them were Dembo, Rudevitch, Mandelstam, Boris Reinchtein, Ludwig Nagel, Bek, Sofia Chentsis, Filippeo, Leventis, Cheftel, Barnekhovsky, etc.[67]

Thus a certain amount of energy had been preserved to fuel the rivalries between small groups—The Will of the People, The Black Repartition, Liberation of Labour—and theoretical debates. The three volumes of the "Historical and Revolutionary Collection" published in the (Soviet) 20s, which we use here, offer us, in an interminable and tedious logorrhea, an account of the cut and thrust, allegedly much more important and sublime than all the questions of universal thought and history. The detail of these debates constitute a deadly material on the spiritual fabric of the Russian revolutionaries of the years 80–90, and it still awaits its historian.

But from the thirties of the Soviet era onwards, it was no longer possible to enumerate with pride and detail all those who had had their share in the revolution; a sort of taboo settled in historical and political publications, the role and name of the Jews in the Russian revolutionary movement ceased to be evoked—and even now, this kind of evocation creates uneasiness. Now, nothing is more immoral and dangerous than to silence anything when History is being written: it only creates a distortion of opposite meaning.

If, as can be read in the *Jewish Encyclopædia*, "to account for the genuine importance of the Jewish component in the Russian liberation movement, to express it in precise figures, does not seem possible,"[68] one can nevertheless, based on various sources, give an approximate picture.

Hessen informs us that "of the 376 defendants, accused of crimes against the State in the first half of 1879, there were only 4% Jews," and "out of the 1,054 persons tried before the Senate during the year 1880…, there were 6.5% of Jews."[69] Similar estimates are found among other authors.

However, from decade to decade, the number of Jews participating in the revolutionary movement increases, their role becomes more influential, more recognised. In the early years of Soviet rule, when it was still a matter of pride, a prominent communist, Lourie-Larine, said: "In tsarist prisons and in exile, Jews usually constituted nearly a quarter of all prisoners and exiles."[70] Marxist historian M. N. Pokrovsky, basing himself on the workforce of the various congresses, concludes that "the Jews represent between a quarter and a third of the organisations of all the revolutionary parties."[71] (*The modern Jewish Encyclopædia* has some reservations about this estimate).

In 1903, in a meeting with Herzl, Witte endeavoured to show that, while representing only 5% of the population of Russia, i.e. 6 million out of 136 million, the Jews had in their midst no less than 50% of revolutionaries.[72]

General N. Sukhotin, commander-in-chief of the Siberian region, compiled statistics on January 1st, 1905 of

political prisoners under surveillance for all of Siberia and by nationality. This resulted in 1,898 Russians (42%), 1,678 Jews (37%), 624 Poles (14%), 167 Caucasians, 85 Baltic and 94 of other nationalities. (Only the exiles are counted there, prisons and penal colony convicts are not taken into account, and the figures are only valid for the year 1904, but this, however, gives a certain overview.) There is, moreover, an interesting precision in connection with those who "went into hiding": 17% of Russians, 64% of Jews, 19% of other nationalities.[73]

Here is the testimony of V. Choulguine: in 1889, the news relating to the student demonstrations of Saint Petersburg reached Kiev. "The long corridors of the university were teeming with a crowd of young people in effervescence. I was struck by the predominance of the Jews. Were they more or less numerous than the Russians, I could not say, but they 'predominated' incontestably, for it was they who were in charge of this tumultuous melee in jackets. Some time later, the professors and the non-striking students began to be chased out of lecture halls. Then this 'pure and holy youth' took false photographs of the Cossacks beating the students; these photographs were said to have been taken 'on the fly' when they were made from drawings: "Not all Jewish students are left-wingers, some were on our side, but those ones suffered a lot afterwards, they were harassed by society." Choulguine adds: "The role of the Jews in the revolutionary effervescence within universities was notorious and unrelated to their number across the country."[74]

Milyukov described all this as "legends about the revolutionary spirit of the Jews… They [government officials] need legends, just like the primitive man needs rhymed prose."[75] Conversely, G. P. Fedotov wrote: "The Jewish nation, morally liberated from the 80s onwards, like the Russian intelligentsia under Peter the Great, is in the highest degree uprooted, internationalist and active… It immediately assumed the leading role in the Russian revolution… It marked the moral profile of the Russian revolutionary with its incisive and sombre character."[76] From the 80s onwards, the Russian and Jewish elites merged not only in a common revolutionary action, but also in all spiritual fads, and especially in the passion for non-rootedness.

In the eyes of a contemporary, simple witness to the facts (Zinaida Altanskaya, who corresponded from the town of Orel with Fyodor Kryukov[*]), this Jewish youth of the beginning of the century appeared as follows: "… with them, there is the art and the love of fighting. And what projects!—vast, bold! They have something of their own, a halo of suffering, something precious. We envy them, we are vexed" (that the Russian youth is not the same).

M. Agursky states the following hypothesis: "Participation in the revolutionary movement was, so to speak, a form of assimilation [more] 'suitable' than the common assimilation through baptism"; and it appears all the more worthy because it also meant a sort of revolt against one's own Jewish *bourgeoisie*[77]—and against one's own religion, which counted for nothing for the revolutionaries.

However, this "proper" assimilation was neither complete nor even real: many of these young men, in their haste, tore themselves from their own soil without really taking root in Russian soil, and remained outside these two nations and two cultures, to be nothing more than this material of which *internationalism* is so fond of.

But as the equal rights of the Jews remained one of the major demands of the Russian revolutionary movement, these young people, by embarking in the revolution, kept in their hearts and minds, the idea they were still serving the interests of their people. This was the thesis that Parvus had adopted as a course of action during his entire life, which he had formulated, defended and inculcated to the young people: the liberation of the Jews from Russia can only be done by overthrowing the Tsarist regime.

This thesis found significant support for a particular layer of Jewish society—middle-aged people, well-off, set, incredibly estranged from the spirit of adventure, but who, since the end of the nineteenth century, fed a permanent irritation against the Russian mode of government. It was in this ideological field that their children grew up before they even received the sap of Judaism to subsist from. An influential member of the Bund, Mr. Raies, points out that at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries "the Jewish *bourgeoisie* did not hide the hopes and expectations it placed in the progress of the revolutionary movement… it, which it once rejected, now had the *bourgeoisie's* favours."[78]

G. Gershuni explained to his judges: "It is *your* persecutions that have driven us to the revolution." In fact, the

explanation is to be found both in Jewish history and in Russian history—at their intersection.

Let us listen to G. A. Landau, a renowned Jewish publicist. He wrote after 1917: “There were many Jewish families, both small and middle-class, in which the parents, *bourgeois* themselves, saw with their benevolent eyes, sometimes proud, always quiet, their offspring being marked by the seal in fashion of one of the social-revolutionary ideologies in vogue.” They also, in fact, “leaned vaguely in favour of this ideology which protested against the persecutors, but without asking what was the nature of this protest or what were these persecutions.” And it was thus that “little by little, the hegemony of socialism took root in Jewish society…”—the negation of civil society and of the State, contempt for *bourgeois* culture, and of the inheritance of past centuries, an inheritance from which the Jews had less difficulty to tear themselves away from since they already had, by Europeanising themselves, renounced their own inheritance.” The revolutionary ideas “in the Jewish milieu… were… doubly destructive,” and for Russia and for themselves. But they penetrated the Jewish milieu much more deeply than the Russian milieu.”[79]

A jeweller from Kiev, Marchak (who even created some pieces to decorate the churches of the city), testifies that “while I was frequenting the *bourgeoisie*, I was contaminated [by the revolutionary spirit].”[80] Moreover, this is what we see with the young Bogrov[*]: that energy, that passion which grows in him during his youth spent in the bosom of a very rich family. His father, a wealthy liberal, gave full liberty to his young terrorist son.—And the Gotz brothers, also terrorists, had for grandfathers two Muscovites rich as Croesus, Gotz on the one hand, and on the other, Vyssotsky, a multi-millionaire tea maker, and these, far from retaining their grandchildren, paid to the S.-R. hundreds of thousands of rubles.

“Many Jews have come to swell the ranks of the Socialists,” continues Landau.[81] In one of his speeches in the Duma (1909), A. I. Guchkov quotes the testimony of a young S.-R.: among other causes of her disenchantment, “she said that the revolutionary movement was entirely monopolised by the Jews and that they saw in the triumph of the revolution their own triumph.”[82]

The enthusiasm for the revolution has seized Jewish society from the bottom to the top, says I. O. Levin: “It is not only the lower strata of the Jewish population of Russia that have devoted themselves to the revolutionary passion,” but this movement “could not fail to catch a large part of the intellectuals and semi-intellectuals of the Jewish people” (semi-intellectuals who, in the 20s, constituted the active executives of the Soviet regime). “They were even more numerous among the liberal professions, from dentists to university teachers—those who could settle outside the Pale of Settlement. Having lost the cultural heritage of traditional Judaism, these people were nonetheless foreign to Russian culture and any other national culture. This spiritual vacuum, hidden under a superficially assimilated European culture, made the Jews, already inclined to materialism, by their trades as tradesmen or craftsmen, very receptive to materialistic political theories… The rationalist mode of thought peculiar to the Jews… predisposes them to adhere to doctrines such as that of revolutionary Marxism.”[83]

The co-author of this collection, V. S. Mandel, remarks: “Russian Marxism in its purest state, copied from the original German, was never a Russian national movement, and Jews in Russia, who were animated by a revolutionary spirit, for which nothing could be easier than assimilating a doctrine exhibited in books in German, were naturally led to take an important part in the work of transplanting this foreign fruit on Russian soil.”[84] F. A. Stepun expressed it thus: “The Jewish youth boldly discussed, quoting Marx in support, the question of the form in which the Russian *moujik* should possess the land. The Marxist movement began in Russia with the Jewish youth inside the Pale of Settlement.”

Developing this idea, V. S. Mandel recalls “The Protocols of the Elders of Zion”…, this stupid and hateful falsity.” Well, “these Jews see in the delusions of the ‘Protocols’ the malicious intention of the anti-Semites to eradicate Judaism,” but they themselves are “ready, in varying degrees, to organise the world on new principles, and believe that the revolution marks a step forward towards the establishment of the heavenly Kingdom on earth, and attribute to the Jewish people, for its greatest glory, the role of leader of the popular movements for freedom, equality and justice—a leader who, of course, does not hesitate to break down the existing political and social regime.” And he gives as an example a quotation from the book of Fritz Kahn, *The Hebrews as a Race and People of Culture*: “Moses, one thousand two hundred and fifty years before Jesus Christ, proclaimed the rights of man… Christ paid with his life the preaching of *Communist manifestos* in a capitalist state”, then “in 1848, the star of Bethlehem rose for the second time… and it

rose again above the roofs of Judea: Marx."[85]

Thus, "of this common veneration for the revolution emerge and distinguish certain currents of opinion in Jewish society—all desperately unrealistic, childishly pretentious, thereby irresistibly aspiring to a troubled era, and not in Russia alone, but encompassing the entire century."[86]

With what casualness and what gravity at the same time, with what beautiful promises Marxism penetrates into the consciousness of cultivated Russia! Finally, the revolution has found its scientific foundation with its cortège of infallible deductions and inevitable predictions!

Among the young Marxists, there is Julius Tsederbaum; Martov, the future great leader of the Mensheviks, who, together with his best friend Lenin, will first found the "Union for the Struggle for the Liberation of the Working Class" (of all Russia)—only he will not enjoy the same protection as Lenin, exiled in the merciful country of Minousine: he will have to serve his three years in the tough region of Tourukhan. It was he, too, who, together with Lenin, designed the *Iskra*[*] and set up a whole network for its dissemination.

But even before collaborating with Lenin to found the All-Russian Social-Democratic Party, Martov, then exiled to Vilnius, had set up the ideological and organisational foundations of a "Jewish Joint Labour Union for Lithuania, Poland and Russia". Martov's idea was that, from now on, propaganda within the masses should be favoured as work within the circles, and, for this, make it "more specifically Jewish", and, in particular, translate it into Yiddish. In his lecture, Martov described the principles of the new Union: "We expected everything from the movement of the Russian working class and considered ourselves as an appendix of the pan-Russian workers' movement… we had forgotten to maintain the link with the Jewish mass who does not know Russian. But at the same time, "without suspecting it, we hoisted the Jewish movement to a height unmatched by the Russians." Now is the time to free the Jewish movement "from the mental oppression to which the [Jewish] *bourgeoisie* has subjected it," which is "the lowest and lowest *bourgeoisie* in the world", "to create a specifically Jewish workers' organisation, which will serve as guide and instructor for the Jewish proletariat." In the "national character of the movement," Martov saw a victory over the *bourgeoisie*, and with this "we are perfectly safe… from nationalism."[87] In the following year, Plekhanov, at the Congress of the International Socialist, described the Jewish Social-Democratic movement as "the vanguard of the working-class army in Russia."[88] It was the latter which became the Bund (Vilnius, 1897), six months before the creation of the Social-Democratic Party of Russia. The next stage is the First Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Party, which takes place in Minsk (where the Central Committee of the Bund was located) in 1898. The *Jewish Encyclopædia* tells us that "out of eight delegates, five were Jewish: the envoys of a Kiev newspaper, *The Workers' Gazette*, B. Eidelman, N. Vigdorchik, and those of the Bund: A. Kremer, A. Mutnik, S. Katz [were also present Radchenko, Petruyvitch and Vannovsky] . Within the Central Committee of the party (of three members) which was constituted at this Congress entered A. Kremer and B. Eidelman."[89] Thus was born the Social-Democratic Labour Party of Russia, in a close relationship with the Bund. (Let us add: even before the creation of *Iskra*, it was to Lenin that the direction of the newspaper of the Bund had been proposed.[90])

The fact that the Bund was created in Vilnius is not surprising: Vilnius was "the Lithuanian Jerusalem", a city inhabited by a whole cultivated Jewish elite, and through which transited, in provenance of the West, all the illegal literature heading to Saint Petersburg and Moscow.[91]

But the Bund, despite its internationalist ideology, "became a factor of national unity of Jewish life," even though "its leaders were guarding against nationalism as if it were the plague" (like the Russian Social-Democrats who succeeded in watching out for it until the end). While subsidies flowed from abroad, consented by the wealthy Jewish milieus, the Bund advocated the principle that there is not a single Jewish people, and rejected the idea of a "universal Jewish nation,"[92] claiming on the contrary, that there are exist two antagonistic classes within the Jewish people (the Bund feared that nationalistic dispositions might "obscure the class consciousness of the proletariat").

However, there was hardly any Jewish proletariat in the strict sense of the term: the Jews seldom entered factories, as F. Kohn explains, "they considered it disgraceful not to be their own master", albeit very modestly—as an artisan or

even an apprentice, when one can nurture the hope of opening one's own workshop. "To be hired in a factory was to lose all illusions as to the possibility of becoming one day one's own master, and that is why working in a factory was a humiliation, a disgrace."[93] (Another obstacle was the reluctance of employers to hire workers whose day of rest was Saturday and not Sunday.) As a result, the Bund declared "Jewish proletariat" both the artisans, and small traders, and clerks (was not every employed worker a proletarian, according to Marx?), and even commercial intermediaries. To all these individuals the revolutionary spirit could be inculcated, and they had be joined to the struggle against the autocracy. The Bund even declared that the Jews "are the best proletariat in the world."[94] (The Bund never renounced the idea of "strengthening its work among Christian workers.")

Not suspected of sympathy for socialism, G. B. Sliosberg writes in this regard that the enormous propaganda deployed by the Bund and some of its interventions "have done harm, and in particular an immediate damage to Jewish trade and their start-up industries." The Bund was turning against the employing instructors the very young apprentices, kids of 14–15 years old; its members broke the tiles of "more or less opulent Jewish houses." In addition, "on Yom-Kippur, young people from the Bund went into the great synagogue [in Vilnius], interrupted the prayer and started an incredible party, with beer flowing abundantly…"[95]

But, in spite of its class fanaticism, the Bund was increasingly based on a universal current equally characteristic of *bourgeois* liberalism: "It was increasingly understood in the cultivated world that the national idea plays an essential role in the awakening of self-consciousness in every man, which obliged the theoreticians of the proletarian circles themselves to raise more broadly the national question"; thus, in the Bund, "assimilationist tendencies were gradually supplanted by national tendencies."[96]—This, Jabotinsky confirms: "As it grows, the Bund replaces a national ideology with cosmopolitanism."[97] Abram Amsterdam, "one of the first important leaders of the Bund", who died prematurely, "tried to reconcile the Marxist doctrine with the ideas of nationalism."[98]—In 1901, at a congress of the Bund, one of the future leaders of the year Seventeen, Mark Lieber (M. I. Goldman), who was then a young man of 20, declared: "so far we have been cosmopolitan believers. We must become national. Do not be afraid of the word. National does not mean nationalist." (May we understand it, even if it is ninety years late!) And, although this congress had endorsed a resolution against "the exaltation of the national sentiment which leads to chauvinism", he also pronounced himself for the national autonomy of the Jews "regardless of the territory inhabited by them."[99]

This slogan of national autonomy, the Bund developed it for a few years, both in its propaganda and its campaign of political banquets of 1904… although nobody knew exactly what could mean autonomy without territory. Thus, every Jewish person was given the right to use only his own language in his dealings with the local administration and the organs of the State… but how? (For should not this right also be granted to the nationals of other nations?)

It should also be noted that, in spite of its socialist tendencies, the Bund, "in its social-democratic programme", pronounced itself "against the demand for the restoration of Poland… and against constituent assemblies for the marches of Russia."[100] Nationalism, yes—but for oneself alone?

Thus, the Bund admitted only Jews in its midst. And once this orientation was taken, and although it was radically anticlerical, it did not accept the Jews who had denied their religion. The parallel Russian Social-Democratic organisations, the Bund, call them "Christian"—and, moreover, how could they be represented differently? But what a cruel offence for Lenin[101] to be so catalogued among the "Christians"!

The Bund thus embodies the attempt to defend Jewish interests, in particular against Russian interests. Here too, Sliosberg acknowledges: "The Bund's action has resulted in a sense of dignity and awareness of the rights of Jewish workers."[102]

Subsequently, the Bund's relations with the Russian Social-Democratic Party were not easy. As with the Polish Socialist Party, which at the time of the birth of the Bund had an "extremely suspicious" attitude towards it and declared that "the isolationism of the Bund places it in an adversarial position in relation to us."[103] Given its increasingly nationalistic tendencies, the Bund could only have conflicting relations with the other branches of Russian Social-Democracy.

Lenin thus describes the discussion he and Martov had with Plekhanov in Geneva in September 1900: "G. V.[*] shows a phenomenal intolerance by declaring that [i.e. the Bund] is in no way a social-democratic organisation, but that it is simply an exploiting organisation that takes advantage of the Russians; he says that our aim is to drive this Bund out of the Party, that the Jews are all without exception chauvinists and nationalists, that the Russian party must be Russian and not turn itself in "bound hand and foot" to the tribe of Gad[**]… G. V. has stuck to his positions without wanting to reconsider them, saying that we simply lack knowledge of the Jewish world and experience in dealing with it."[104] (From what ear Martov, the first initiator of the Bund, must have heard this diatribe?!)

In 1898 the Bund, despite its greater seniority, agreed to join the Russian Social-Democratic Party, but as *a whole*, with full autonomy over Jewish affairs. It therefore agreed to be a member of the Russian party, but on condition that it did not interfere in its affairs. Such was the agreement between them. However, at the beginning of 1902, the Bund considered that autonomy, so easily obtained at the 1st Congress of the Social Democratic Party, was no longer enough for it and that it now wanted to join the party on a *federal* basis, benefiting of full independence, even in programme matters. Regarding this it published a pamphlet against the *Iskra*.[105] The central argument, Lenin explains, was that the Jewish proletariat "is a part of the Jewish people, which occupies a special place among the nations."[106]

At this stage, Lenin sees red and feels obliged to clash with the Bund himself. He no longer calls only "to maintain pressure [against autocracy] by avoiding a fragmentation of the party into several independent formations,"[107] but he embarks on a passionate argument to prove (following, admittedly, Kautsky) that Jews are by no means a nation: they have neither common language nor territory (a flatly materialistic judgement: the Jews are one of the most authentic nations, the most united found on earth. United, it is in spirit. In his superficial and vulgar internationalism, Lenin could not understand the depth or historical roots of the Jewish question.) "The idea of a separate Jewish people is politically reactionary,"[108] it justifies Jewish particularism. (And all the more "reactionary" were Zionists to him!) Lenin saw a solution for the Jews only in their total assimilation—which amounts to saying, in fact, to cease outright being Jewish.

In the summer of 1903, at the 2nd Congress of the Social-Democratic Party of Russia in Brussels, out of 43 delegates, there were only five of the Bund (however, "many Jews participated"). And Martov, "supported by twelve Jews" (among them Trotsky, Deutsch, Martynov, Liadov, to name but a few), spoke on behalf of the party against the "federal" principle demanded by the Bund. The members of the Bund then left the Congress (which permitted Lenin's proposed statutes in paragraph 1 to prevail), and then also left the party.[109] (After the split of the Social Democratic Party into Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, "the leaders of the Mensheviks were A. Axelrod, A. Deutsch, L. Martov, M. Lieber, L. Trotsky,"[110] as well as F. Dan, R. Abramovich—Plekhanov remaining on the sidelines.)

On the "Street of the Jews," as it was then called, the Bund quickly became a powerful and active organisation. "Until the eve of the events of 1905, the Bund was the most powerful social-democratic organisation in Russia, with a well-established apparatus, good discipline, united members, flexibility and great experience in conspiring." Nowhere else is there a discipline like in the Bund. The "bastion" of the Bund was the North-West region.[111]

However, formidable competition arose with the "Independent Jewish Workers' Party" which was created in 1901 under the influence and the exhortations of Zubatov[*]: it persuaded the Jewish workers and all who would listen that it was not the social democratic ideology they needed but struggle against the *bourgeoisie* defending their economic interests to them—the government was interested in their success, they could act legally, their authority would a benevolent referee. The head of this movement was the daughter of a miller, the intrepid Maria Vilbouchevitch. "The supporters of Zubatov… enjoyed great success in Minsk with the (Jewish) workers"; they were passionately opposed to the members of the Bund and obtained much by organising economic strikes. They also acted, not without success, in Odessa (Khuna Shayevich). But just as, throughout the country, the frightened government (and Plehve[**]) foiled Zubatov's project , likewise with the "independents": Shayevich was arrested in 1903, sentenced to a fairly short sentence—but then came the news of the Kishinev pogrom, and the "independents" had their hands tied[112]

Meanwhile, "the Bund was receiving help from foreign groups" from Switzerland first and then from Paris,

London, the United States where “action groups… had reached sizeable proportions.” Organised “clubs, Rotarian action groups, associations of aid to the work of the Bund in Russia. This aid was mainly financial.”[113]

From 1901, the Bund renounced “economic terror” (lashing out on employers, monitoring factories), because it “obscured the social-democratic consciousness of the workers”, and they pretended equally of condemning political terror.”[114] This did not prevent Guirsh Lekkert, a cobbler who was a member of the Bund, from shooting at the governor of Vilnius—and to be hanged for it. The young Mendel Deutsch, still a minor, also fired shots whose significance marked “the apogee of the movement of the Jewish masses.”[115] And already the Bund was wondering if it should not go back to terror. In 1902, the Berdichev Conference endorsed a resolution on “organised revenge”. But a debate broke out in the Bund, and the following year the Congress formally annulled this decision of the Conference.[116] According to Lenin, the Bund, in 1903, went through “terrorist temptations, which it then got over.”[117]

Terror, which had already manifested itself more than once in Russia, enjoyed a general indulgence, an indulgence which was in the air of the time, and which, with the increasingly widespread custom of holding, “just in case,” a firearm (and it was easy to obtain one via smuggling) could not fail to arouse, in the minds of the youth of the Pale of Settlement, the idea of forming their own combat regiments.

But the Bund had active and dangerous competitors. Is it a historical coincidence, or the time had simply come for the Jewish national consciousness to be reborn, in any case, it is in 1897, the year of the creation of the Bund, just a month prior, the First Universal Congress of Zionism took place. And it was in the early 1900s that young Jews pioneered a new path, “a public service path… at the crossroads between *Iskra* and Bne Moshe” (“the sons of Moses”), some turning right, the others heading left.”[118] “In the programmes of all our groupings which appeared between 1904 and 1906, the national theme held its proper place.”[119] We have seen that the Socialist Bund had not cut it off, and it now only had to condemn Zionism all the more firmly in order to excite national sentiment to the detriment of class consciousness.

It is true that “the numbers of the Zionist circles among the youth gave way to the number of young people adhering to the revolutionary socialist parties.”[120] (Although there were counter-examples: thus the publisher of the Jewish Socialist *La Pravda* of Geneva, G. Gurevitch, had re-converted to devote himself entirely to the issue of the Jews’ settlement in Palestine.) The ditch dug between Zionism and the Bund was gradually filled by such and such a new party, then another, then a third—Poalei-Tsion, Zeirei-Tsion, the “Zionist-Socialists”, the *serpovtsy* (*seimovtsy*)—, each combining in its own way Zionism and socialism.

It is understandable that between parties so close to one other a fierce struggle developed, and this did not facilitate the task of the Bund. Nor did the emigration of the Jews from Russia into Israel, which gained momentum in those years: why emigrate? What sense does this have when the Jewish proletariat must fight for socialism side by side with the working class of all countries…, which would automatically solve the Jewish question everywhere?

The Jews have often been criticised in the course of history for the fact that many of them were usurers, bankers, merchants. Yes, the Jews formed a significant detachment, creator of the world of capital—and mainly in its financial forms. This, the great political economist Werner Sombart described it with a vigorous and convincing pen. In the first years of the Revolution this circumstance was, on the contrary, attributed to the Jews, as an inevitable *formation* on the road to socialism. And in one of his indictments, in 1919, Krylenko found it necessary to emphasise that “the Jewish people, since the Middle Ages, has taken out of their ranks the holders of a new influence, that of capital… they precipitated… the dissolution of economic forms of another age.”[121] Yes, of course, the capitalist system in the economic and commercial field, the democratic system in the political field are largely indebted to the constructive contribution of the Jews, and these systems in turn are the most favourable to the development of Jewish life and culture.

But—and this is an unfathomable historical enigma—these systems were not the only ones that the Jews favoured.

As V. S. Mandel reminds us, if we refer to the Bible, we discover that “the very idea of a monarchy was invented by no other people but the Hebrews, and they transmitted it to the Christian world. The monarch is not chosen by the

people, he is the chosen by God. Hence the rite which the Christian peoples have inherited from the coronation and anointing of the kings."[122] (One might rectify by recalling that the Pharaohs long ago were also anointed, and also bearers of the divine will.) For his part, the former Russian revolutionary A. Valt-Lessine remembers: "The Jews did not accord great importance to the revolutionary movement. They put all their hopes in the petitions addressed to Saint Petersburg, or even in the bribes paid to the officials of the ministries—but not at all in the revolution."[123] This kind of approach to the influential spheres received, on the part of the impatient Jewish youth, the sobriquet, known since the Middle Ages and now infamous, of *chtadlan*. Someone like G. B. Sliosberg, who worked for many years in the Senate and the Ministry of the Interior, and who patiently had to solve Jewish problems of a private nature, thought that this avenue was the safest, with the richest future for the Jews, and he was ulcerated to note the impatience of these young people.

Yes, it was perfectly unreasonable, on the part of the Jews, to join the revolutionary movement, which had ruined the course of normal life in Russia and, consequently, that of the Jews of Russia. Yet, in the destruction of the monarchy and in the destruction of the *bourgeois* order—as, some time before, in the reinforcement of it—the Jews found themselves in the vanguard. Such is the innate mobility of the Jewish character, its extreme sensitivity to social trends and the advancement of the future.

It will not be the first time in the history of mankind that the most natural impulses of men will suddenly lead to monstrosities most contrary to their nature.

Footnotes

- *Molodaia Rossiia*: Revolutionary proclamation of the Russian Jacobins dated May 1862, written by P. G. Zaychnevsky.
    - Dmitri Vladimirovich Karakozov (1840–1866) fired a shot at Alexander II on 4/16 April 1866: the first in a long series of attacks. Condemned to death and executed.
        - Nikolai Vladimirovich Stankevich (1813–1840): philosopher and poet, humanist. Founded in 1831 the "Stankevich circle" where great intellectuals such as Bielinsky, Aksakov, Granovsky, Katkov, etc. meet. Emigrated in 1837.
            - Alexander Ivanovich Herzen (1812–1870): writer, philosopher and "Occidentalist" Russian revolutionary. Spent six years in exile. Emigrated in 1847 and founded the first anti-war newspaper published abroad, *Kolokol* (The Bell). Author of Memoirs on his time, *Past and Thoughts*.
                - Nikolai Platonovich Ogariov (1813–1877): poet, Russian revolutionary publicist. Friend and companion in arms of Herzen. Emigrated in 1856. Participated in the foundation of Land and Liberty.

- Nikolai Isaakovich Outine (1841–1883): revolutionary, leading member of Earth and Freedom. Condemned to death *in absentia*. Emigrated in 1863, returned to Russia in 1878.
    - Sergei Gennadyevich Nechayev (1847–1882): revolutionary and Russian conspirator, author of the famous *Catechism of the Revolutionary*. Organised in 1869 the murder of the student Ivanov, supposedly a traitor to the Cause (which inspired Dostoevsky's *The Demons*). Leaves abroad. Delivered by Switzerland to Russia, sentenced to twenty years of imprisonment. Dies in prison.

1. *L. Deutsch*, King evreiev v rousskom revolioutsionnom dvijenii (The role of the Jews in the Russian revolutionary movement), vol. 1, 2nd ed., M.L., GIZ, 1925, pp. 20–22.
    - People who succeed in passing, illegally through the borders, revolutionary writings banned in Russia.

2. *D. Schub*, Evro vrousskoï revolyutsii (The Jews in the Russian Revolution). JW-2; *Hessen*, t. 2, p. 213.
3. *O. V. Aptekman*, Dvc doroguiie teni (Two Dear Shadows); Byloie: newspaper Posviaschionnyi istorii osvoboditclnogo dvijeniia (Past: a review of the history of the liberation movement), M. 1921, No. 16, p. 9.

- Piotr Lavrovich Lavrov (1823–1900): famous theorist of populism. Emigrated in 1870. Published the magazine *Vperiod* (Forward).

4. *L. Deutsch*, pp. 97, 108, 164, 169–174, 196.
5. *Ibidem*, pp. 20, 130, 139.

- Held in March 1877, also said trial of "Muscovites", of which sixteen women.
    - Held from October 1877 to February 1878: the most important political trial of Russia before 1917 (there were four thousand arrests among the populists of the "march to the people").

6. *Ibidem*, pp. 33, 86–88, 185.
    - Andrei Ivanovich Jeliabov (1851–1881): one of the founders of The Will of the People. Named the "Russian Robespierre". Organiser of the attacks against Alexander II. Executed in April 1881.
        - In 1876–77. A group of revolutionary populists tried to raise a peasant insurrection in the district of Tchiguirine in Ukraine.

7. RJE, t. 1, M. 1994, p. 377.
8. RJE, t. 2, p. 309.

- Isaac Yakovlevich Pavlovsky, known as I. Yakovlev: journalist, one of the accused of the trial of the one hundred and ninety-three. Emigre, protected by Turgenev, became the correspondent in Paris of the *New Times*.
9. *Deutsch*, pp. 77–79, 85, 89–112, 140, 21X: V. I. Iohelsohn, Daliokoie prochloie (A distant Past); Byloie, 1918, No. 13, pp. 54–55.
10. *Deutsch*, pp. 18, 149, 151, 154.
    - Ahad-Haam (ie "One of his people"), says Asher Finzberg: Yiddish writer very involved in the Zionist movement.

11. *Ibidem*, pp. 17–18.

- Ferdinand Lassalle (1825–1864): philosopher, economist, jurist and famous German socialist.
    - Rudin, the hero of Turgenev's novel, *Rudin* (1856), whom the author put to death on the barricades in Paris in 1848.

12. *K. Leites*, Pamiati M. A. Krolia (The memory of M. A. Krol), JW-2, p. 410.
13. *B. Frumkin*. Iz istorii revolioutsionnogo dvijeniia sredi evreiev v 1870-x godakh (Pages of the history of the revolutionary movement among the Jews in the 70s) Sb. Soblazn Sotsializma: Revolutionsiia v Rossii i evrei (Rec. The Temptation of Socialism Revolution in Russia and the Jews), composed by A. Serebrennikov, Paris, YMCA Press; Rousskii Put (The Russian Way), 1995. p. 49.
14. JE, L 3, p. 336.
15. *Deutsch*, pp. 56, 67–68.
16. *Iohelson*, Byloie, 1918, No. 13, pp. 56–57.
17. *Ibidem*, pp. 61, 66.
18. *G. J. Aronson*, V. borbe za grajdanskiie i nalsionalnyie prava: obschcstvcnnyie tetcheniia v rousskom evreistve (In the struggle for national civil rights: the social currents among the Jews of Russia), UR-1, p. 210.
19. *Aptekman*. Byloie, 1921, No. 16, pp. 11–12.
20. *Deutsch*, pp. 183–185.
21. *O. V. Aptekman*, Flerovski-Bervi i kroujok Dolgouchina (Bervi-Flerovsky and the circle of Dolgouchine), Byloie, 1922, No. 18, p. 63.
22. JE, t. 4, p. 714.

- Molokanes or "milk drinkers" (they consume milk during Lent) are a Russian sect that goes back to the eighteenth century. They were persecuted, exiled in 1800 north of the Sea of Azov, and some immigrated to the United States.
23. *Aptekman*, Byloie, 1922, No. 18, p. 63.
    - Vassili Vasilievich Bervi-Flerovsky (1829–1918): Russian publicist, sociologist, economist. Participated in the populism of the 60s. In exile from 1862 to 1887. Wrote the *Notes of a Revolutionary Utopian*.

24. *Ibidem**.

- The Bund (in Yiddish: the Union): the "General Union of Jewish Workers of Lithuania, Poland and Russia", founded in Vilnius in 1897, related to the SD party in 1898–1903; then again in 1906–1918 close to the Mensheviks. Dissolved in 1921.

25. Obschaia gazela (General Gazette), No. 35, 31 August–6 Sept. 1995, p. 11.
26. 26*Deutsch*, pp. 106, 205–206.
27. 27*Iohelson*, Byloie, 1918, No. 13, p. 74.
28. 28*Deutsch*, pp. 34–37, 183.
29. 29*Ibidem*, pp. 194 et suiv. ; *Iohelson*, Byloie, 1918, No. 13, p. 69.

- *The Black Repartition*, a clandestine newspaper bearing the same name as the organisation, which knew five issues in 1880–1881 Minsk-Geneva.

30. *Aptekman*, Byloie. 1922, No. 18. pp. 73, 75.

31. *Deutsch*, pp. 38, 41, 94, 189.
32. *Ibidem*, pp. 78–79, 156–157.
33. Grigori Goldenberg v Petropavolvskoi kreposti (Grigori Goldenberg in prison Saint-Pierre-el-Saint-Paul); Krasnyi arkhiv: istorilcheskii journal Tsentrarkhiva RSFSR (The Red Archives: Historical Review of the FSSR Archives Center), M., 1922–1941, t. 10; 1925, pp. 328–331.
34. *Deutsch**, pp. 85–86.
35. *Ibidem*, p.132.
36. RJE, t. 1, p. 344.

- Liubov Issaakovna Axelrod: philosopher, writer, member of the Menshevik party. His pen name is “the Orthodox” (in the non-confessional sense of the word).

37. *Deutsch*, pp. 61–62, 198–201, 203–216.

- The Ghiliaks are a tribe of the north of the island of Sakhalin and the valley of the lower Amur.
  - The Tchouktches, a tribe of eastern Siberia occupying a territory ranging from the Sea of Behring to the Kolyma. Nomads and sedentary. Opposed the Russian conquest.
    - The Yukaghirs are a tribe of the north-east of Siberia, very small in number.

38. JE, t. 6, p. 284.

- The lakuts are a people of northeastern Siberia, occupying both banks of the Lena, extending east to the Kolyma River, north to the Arctic Ocean, south to the Yablovoi mountains.
  - The Buryats, people of Siberia around Lake Baikal, partly repressed towards Mongolia.
    - Filippo Turati (1857–1932): one of the founders of the Italian Socialist Party. Emigrated in 1926.

39. RJE, t. 2, p. 166; t. l, p. 205.

- The Messenger of Europe: 1) a journal founded by Karamzin and published from 1802 to 1830; 2) a monthly magazine with a liberal orientation, which appeared from 1866 to 1918 in Saint Petersburg.
  - *The New Times*: ultra-conservative Petersburg daily founded by the publicist Suvorin. Which appeared from 1868 to 1917.

40. *Deutsch*, pp. 84–85; Lohelsohn. Byloe, 1918, no. 13, pp. 53–75; L. Goumtch. Pervyie evreiskiie rabotchiie kroujki (The first Jewish workers’ circles), Byloie, 1907, n. 6/18, p. 68.
41. *Deutsch*, p. 231.
42. RHC, t. 1, 2.
43. *Leonard Schapiro*, The Role of the Jews in the Russian Revolutionary Movement, The Slavonic and East European Review, Vol. 40, London, Athlone Press, 1961–62, p. 157.
44. JW.-2*, p. 392.
45. JE, t. 13, p. 644.
46. *Hessen*, t. 2, pp. 213–214.
47. *Ibidem*, p. 214.
48. RHC, 1.1, p. 45.

- March 1st, 1881: day of the assassination of Alexander II.

49. *Deutsch*, pp. 38–39, Protses dvadtsati narodovoltsev v 1882 g. (The trial of the members of The Will of the People in 1882), Byloie, 1906, no. 1, pp. 227–234.

- The “Ulyanov group”, named after Alexander Ilyich Ulyanov, Lenin’s elder brother. Faction of the Will of the People. Alexander Ulyanov prepared an attack on Alexander III in 1887. He was condemned to death and executed.

50. RJE, t. 1, p. 314.

- One pood is equivalent to 16.38 kilos.

- Mikhail Rafaelovich Gotz (1866–1906): member of the S.-R. party. Emigrated in 1900.

51. *O. S. Minor*, lakutskaia drama 22 marta 1889 goda (The drama of Yakutia of 22 March 1889), Byloie, 1906, no. 9, pp. 138–141, 144; JE, t. 5, p. 599.
52. *Gounitch*, Byloie. 1907, no. 6/18, p. 68.
53. *I. Mark*, Pamiati I. M. Tcherikover (In memory of I. M. Tcherikover), JW-2, pp. 424–425.
54. *Deutsch*, pp. 3–4.
55. *I. Iliacheviich* (I. Rubinovilch), Chto delay evreiam v Rossii? (What can the Jews do in Russia?), Soblazn Sotsializma (The Temptation

of Socialism), pp. 185–186.
56. *Schub*, JW-2*, p. 134.
57. *Ibidem*, pp. 133–134.
58. *I. Martov*, Zapiski sotsial-demokrata (Notebooks of a Social-Democrat), Berlin, ed. Grjebine, 1922, pp. 187–189.
59. *N. A. Buchbinder*, Rabotchiie o propagandistskikh kroujkakh (Workers in regard to circles of propagandists), Soblazn sotsializma (The temptation of socialism), p. 230.
60. *Gurvitch*, Byloie, op. cit., pp. 65–68, 74.
61. *Ibidem*, pp. 66–68, 72–77.
62. *J. Krepliak*, Poslesloviie k statie Lessina (Postface to the article by Lessine), JW-2, p. 392.
63. *Abramova*, Vragi li trudovomou narodou evrei? (Are the Jews enemies of the working people?), Tiflis, Izdatelskaia Komissiia Kraicvogo Soveta Kavkazskoi armii (Editorial Commission of the Regional Soviet of the Caucasian Army), 1917, pp. 3–31.

- S.-R.: Social-Revolutionary party. Born in 1901, it preached terror. Subjected to splits after the revolution of 1905. Remained powerful among the intelligentsia.
    - Grand Duke Vladimir Alexandrovich (1847–1909): brother of Alexander III, father of the Grand Duke Cyril.

64. *Deutsch*, p. 136.
65. RHC, t. 2, pp. 36, 38–40.
66. *Ibidem*, t. 2, pp. 198–199.
67. *Ibidem*, p. 36.
68. JE, t. 13, p. 645.
69. *Hessen*, t. 2, p. 212.
70. *I. Larme*, Evrei i Anti-Semitism v SSSR (The Jews and Anti-Semitism in the USSR), ML, 1929, p. 31.
71. SJE, t. 7*, 1994, p. 258.
72. *G. Svet*, Rousskiie evrei v sionizme i v stroitelstve Palestiny i Izrailia (The Russian Jews in Zionism and the Edification of Israel), p. 258.
73. Iz islorii borby s revolioutsici v 1905 g. (Fragments of the History of the Fight with the Revolution of 1905), Krasnyi arkhiv (Red Archives), 1929, vol. 32, p. 229.
74. V. V. Choulguine, "Chto nam v nikh ne nravitsa…": Ob antisemitizme v Rossii. ("What we do not like about them": anti-Semitism in Russia), Paris, 1929, pp. 53–54, 191.
75. Duma State, 4th Legislature, Transcripts of Meetings, Session 5, Meeting 18, 16 Dec. 1916, p. 1174.
76. *G. P. Fedotov*, Litso Rossii; Sbornik stratei (The Face of Russia, collection of articles) (1918–1931), Paris, YMCA Press, 1967, pp. 113–114.

- Fyodor Dmitrievich Kryukov (1870–1920): writer of the Gift, populist, died of typhus during the civil war. He has been attributed the true paternity of the *Peaceful Gift* of the Cholokov Nobel prize.

77. *M. Agursky*, Sovmcslimy li sionizm i sotsializm? (Are Zionism and socialism compatible?), "22", Obschestvenno-polititchcskii i literaturnyi journal evreiskoi intellignntsii iz SSSR V Izrail ("22": social and political review of Jewish intellectuals emigrated from the USSR in Israel), Tel-Aviv, 1984, No. 36. p. 130.
78. *M. Rafes*, Natsionalistitcheskii "ouklon" Bunda (The nationalist "tendency" of the Bund), Soblazn Sotsializma (The temptation of socialism), p. 276.
79. *G. A. Landau*, Rcvolioutsionnyie idei v evreiskoi obschestvennosti (Revolutionary ideas in Jewish public opinion), Rossiia i evrei: Sb. 1 (Russia and the Jews, Collection 1). Otetchestvennoie obiedineniie ruskikh evreiev zagranitsei (Patriotic Union of Russian Jews Abroad), Paris, YMCA Press, 1978 (Berlin, Osnova, 1924), pp. 106–109.
80. *A. O. Marchak*, Inlerviou radiostanlsii "Svoboda" (Interview at "Radio Liberty"), Vospominaniia o revolioutsii 1917 goda (Memories on the Revolution of 1917), Int. No. 17, Munich, 1965, p. 9

- Dmitry Grigoryevich Bogrov: young secret service agent. Shot and killed the minister A. Stolypine in Kiev (1911). Condemned to death and executed.

81. Landau, op. cit., p. 109.
82. *A. Guchkov*, Retch v Gosoudarstvennoi Doume 16 dek. 1909; Po zaprosou o vzryvc na Astrakhanskoi oulitse (Speech to the State Duma of 16 Dec. 1909, enquiry into the explosion of Astrakhan Street), A. I. Goutchkov v Tretei Gosoudarstvennoi Doume (1907–1912 Gg.): Cb. Retchei (A. I. Guchkov to the third State Duma) (1907–1912), Collection of speeches, Saint Petersburg, 1912, pp. 143–144.
83. *I. O. Levin*, Evrei u revolioutsi (The Jews and the Revolution), Rossia i evrei (Russia and the Jews), op. Cit., pp. 130–132.

84. *V. S. Mandel*, Konservativnyiee i razrouchitelnyie idei v evreistve (Conservative ideas and destructive ideas in Jewish society), *ibidem*, p 199.
85. *Mandel, ibidem*, pp. 172–173.
86. *I. M. Biekerman*, Rossiya i rouskoie evreistvo (Russia and the Jews of Russia), *ibidem*, p. 34.

- *The Iskra* (The Spark) is the first Marxist newspaper created by Lenin abroad. Was published from 1900 to 1903. Was resumed by the Mensheviks and was published until 1905.

87. *I. Martov*, Povorotnyi punkt v istorii evreiskogo rabotchego dvijeniia (A turning point in the history of the workers' movement Soblazn Sotsializma (The temptation of socialism), pp. 249, 259–264, JE, t. 5, p. 94.
88. G. V. Plekhanov o sotsialistitcheskom dvijenii sredi evreiev (G. V. Plekhanov on the socialist movement among the Jews), Soblazn Sotsializma (The temptation of socialism), p. 266.
89. SJE, t. 7, p. 396.
90. *V. I. Lenin*, Sotchincniia (Works in 45 vols., 4th ed.), Gospolitizdat, 1941–1967, vol. 5, pp. 463–464, 518.
91. *Schub*, JW-2, p. 137.
92. *Aronson*, V borbe za… (In the fight for…), BJWR-1, p. 222.
93. Revolioutsionnoie dvijeniie sredi evreiev (The revolutionary movement among the Jews) Sb. 1, M.; Vsesoiouznoie Obschestvo Politkatorjan i Ssylno-poselentsev (Collection 1, M., Association for the Soviet Union of Prisoners and Political Exiles), 1930, p. 25.
94. *S. Dimanstein*, Revolioutsionnoie dvijeniie sredi evreiev (The Revolutionary Movement Among the Jews), Sb. 1905: Istoriia rcvolioutsionnogo dvijeniia v otdelnykh otcherkakh (Collection 1905: History of the Revolutionary Movement, some separate studies), directed by N. Pokrovsky, T. 3, Book 1, M-L., 1927, pp. 127, 138, 156.
95. *G. B. Sliosberg*, Dela minouvehikh dnei: Zapiski ruskogo evreia (Things of the Past: Notes of a Russian Jew), 3 vols., Paris, 1933–1934, vol. 3, pp. 136–137.
96. JE, t. 3, p. 337.
97. *V. Jabotinski*, Vvdeniie (Preface) to Kh. N. Bialik, Pesni i poemy (Songs and poems), Saint Petersburg, ed. Zaltsman, 1914, p. 36.
98. JE, t. 2, p. 354.
99. Aronson, V borbe za… (In the fight for…), BJWR-1*, pp. 220–222.
100. JE, t. 5, p. 99.
101. *Lenin*, 4th ed., Vol. 6, p. 298.
102. *Sliosberg*, t. 2, p. 258.
103. JE*, t. 5, p. 95.

- G. V.: Georgiy Valentinovich Plekhanov (1856–1918). Social-democrat, Marxist, leading member of The Will of the People. Emigrated in 1880. Leader of the Menshevik party.
    - Gad. One of the twelve sons of Jacob. One of the twelve tribes of Israel.

104. *Lenin*, 4th ed., Vol. 4, p. 311.
105. JE, t. 5, pp. 96–97.
106. *Lenin*, 4th ed., t.7, p.77.
107. *Ibidem*, t. 6, p. 300.
108. *Ibidem*, t. 7, pp. 83–84.
109. JE, t. 5, p. 97; SJE, I. 7, p. 397.
110. SJE, t. 7, p. 397.
111. *Dimanstein*, "1905", vol. 3, Book I, pp. 127, 138, 156.

- Sergei Vasilyevich Zubatov (1864–1917): Chief of the Moscow Police and Special Police Department (1902–1905).
    - Viatcheslav Konstantinovich Plehve (1846–1904): cunning Minister of the Interior, killed by the terrorist S. R. Sozonov.

112. *N. A. Buchbinder*, Nezavissimaia evreiskaia rabolchaia partiia (The Independent Jewish Workers' Party). Krasnaia letopis: Istoritcheskii journal (Red Chronicle: Historical Review), 1922, no. 2–3, pp. 208–241.
113. JE, t. 5, p. 101; SJE, t. 1, pp. 559–560.
114. JE, t.5, p.96.
115. *Dimanstein*, "1905", T. 3, Book I, pp. 149–150.
116. JE*, t. 5, p. 97.
117. *Lenin*, 4th ed. 6, p. 288.
118. I. Ben-Tsvi.

119. *S. M. Ginzburg*, O roussko-evreiskoi intelligentsii (From the Russo-Jewish Intelligence), Sb. Evreiski mir; Ejegodnik na 1939 g. (Rcc. The Jewish World, Annual for the year 1939), Paris, Association of the Russo-Jewish Intelligence, p. 39.
120. *Sliosberg*, t. 3, p. 133.
121. *N. V. Krylenko*, Za piat lct. 1918–1922: Obvinitelnyie retchi po naibolee kroupnym protsessam, zaslouchannym v Moskovskom i Verkhovnom Revolioutsionnykh Tribounalakh (Over five years, 1918–1922: Submissions made in the highest trials before the Supreme Court and the Moscow Revolutionary Tribunal), 1923, p. 353.
122. *Mandel*, Rossia i evrei (Russia and the Jews), op. Cit., p. 177.
123. *A. Lessine*, Epizody iz moei jizni (Episodes of My Life), JW-2, p. 388.

Chapter 7

The Birth of Zionism

How did the Jewish conscience evolve in Russia during the second half of the nineteenth century? Towards 1910, Vladimir Jabotinsky describes this evolution in his somewhat passionate manner: at first, the mass of Jews opposed the Enlightenment, "the fanatic prejudice of an overvalued specificity." But time did its work, and "as much Jews, historically, fled humanist culture, as much they aspire to it now… and this thirst for knowledge is so widespread that it perhaps makes us, Jews of Russia, the first nation in the world." However, "running towards the goal, we passed it. Our goal was to form a Jew who, by staying Jewish, could live a life that would be that of the universal man", and "now we have totally forgotten that we must remain Jewish", "we stopped attaching a price to our Jewish essence, and it began to weigh on us." We must "extirpate this mentality from self-contempt and revive the mentality of self-respect… We complain that we are despised, but we are not far from despising ourselves."[1]

This description reflects the general trend towards assimilation, but not all aspects of the picture. As we have already seen (chapter 4), in the late sixties of the nineteenth century, the publicist and man of letters Smolenskin had spoken out vigorously against the tendency to assimilate Jewish intellectuals, as he had observed it in Odessa or as it had spread in Germany. And he at once declared war on both "bigots and false devotees who want to drive out all knowledge of the house of Israel." No! One must not be ashamed of their origins, one must cherish their national language and dignity; however, national culture can only be preserved through language, the ancient Hebrew. This is all the more important because "Judaism deprived of territory" is a particular phenomenon, "a spiritual nation".[2] The Jews are indeed a nation, not a religious congregation. Smolenskin advanced the doctrine of "progressive Jewish nationalism."[3]

Throughout the 70s, Smolenskin's voice remained practically unheard of. At the end of this period, however, the liberation of the Slavs from the Balkans contributed to the national awakening of the Jews of Russia themselves. But the pogroms of 1881–1882 caused the ideals of *Haskala* to collapse; "The conviction that civilisation was going to put an end to the persecutions of another age against the Jews and that these, thanks to the Enlightenment, would be able to approach the European peoples, this conviction was considerably shaken."[4] (The experience of the pogroms in the south of Ukraine is thus extrapolated to all the Jews of Europe?) Among the Jews of Russia "there appeared the type of the 'repentant intellectual', of those who aspired to return to traditional Judaism."[5]

It was then that Lev Pinsker, a well-known doctor and publicist, already sixty years of age, gave the Jews of Russia and Germany a vigorous appeal to *self-emancipation*.[*] Pinsker wrote that faith in emancipation had collapsed, that it was now necessary to stifle every ounce of hope in brotherhood among peoples. Today, "the Jews do not constitute a living nation; they are strangers everywhere; they endure oppression and contempt on the part of the peoples who surround them." The Jewish people is "the spectre of a dead wandering among the living". "One must be blind not to see that the Jews are the 'chosen people' of universal hatred. The Jews cannot "assimilate to any nation and consequently cannot be tolerated by any nation." "By wanting to mingle with other peoples, they have frivolously sacrificed their own nationality," but "nowhere have they obtained that the others recognise them as native-born inhabitants equal to them." The destiny of the Jewish people cannot depend on the benevolence of other peoples. The practical conclusion thus lies in the creation of "a people on its own territory". What is needed, therefore, is to find an appropriate territory, "no matter where, in what part of the world,"[6] and that the Jews come to populate it.

Moreover, the creation in 1860 of the Alliance [Israelite Universal] was nothing but the first sign of Jewish refusal of a single option—assimilation.

There already existed among the Jews of Russia a movement of *Palestinophilia*, the aspiration to return to Palestine. (Conforming, in essence, to traditional religious salutation: "Next year in Jerusalem.") This movement gained momentum after 1881–1882. "Stretching out its efforts to colonise Palestine… so that within a century the Jews can

finally leave the inhospitable land of Europe"… The slogans that the Enlightenment had previously broadcasted, inciting to fight "traditionalism, Hasidism and religious prejudices, gave way to a call for reconciliation and the union of all layers of Jewish society for the realisation of the ideals" of Palestine, "for the return to the Judaism of our fathers." "In many cities of Russia, circles were formed, called circles of the 'Lovers of Zion'—Khovevei-Tsion.[7*]

And it was thus that an idea joined another to rectify it. Going to settle elsewhere, yes, but not anywhere: in Palestine.

But what had happened in Palestine? "The first crusade resulted in the virtual disappearance of the few Hebrews who remained in Palestine." Nevertheless, "a tiny Jewish religious community had succeeded in surviving and the collapse of the Crusader State, and the conquest of the country by the Mamelukes, and the invasion by the Mongol hordes." Over the following centuries, the Jewish population was somewhat replenished by a modest migratory flow of "believers from different countries". At the end of the eighteenth century a certain number of Hasidim emigrated from Russia. "In the middle of the nineteenth century, there were twelve thousand Jews in Palestine," whereas at the end of the eleventh century there were twenty-five thousand. "These Jewish towns in the land of Israel constituted what was called the *Yishuv*. All their inhabitants (men) were only studying Judaism, and nothing else. They lived on *Haluka*—subsidies sent by Jewish communities in Europe. These funds were distributed by the rabbis, hence the absolute authority of the rabbis. The leaders of the *Yishuv* "rejected any attempt to create in the country even an embryo of productive work of Jewish origin." They were studying exclusively the Talmud, nothing else, and on a fairly elementary level. "The great Jewish historian G. Gretz, who visited Palestine in 1872," found that "only a minority studied for real, the others preferred to stroll the streets, remained idle, engaged in gossip and slander." He believed that "this system favours obscurantism, poverty and degeneration of the Jewish population of Palestine"—and for this he himself "had to undergo *Herem*[**]."[8]

In 1882, in Kharkov, Palestinophile students founded the Biluim circle. They proposed to "create in Palestine a model agricultural colony", to set "the tone to the general colonisation of Palestine by the Jews"; they undertook to found circles in several cities of Russia. (Later they created a first settlement in Palestine, but were confronted to the hostility and opposition of the traditional *Yishuv*: the rabbis demanded that, according to ancient custom, the cultivation of the earth be suspended one year out of seven.[9])

Pinsker supported the advocates of the return to Palestine: in 1887 he summoned the first Congress of Palestinophiles in Katovice, then in Druskeniki, and the second in 1887. Propagandists began to cover the Pale of Settlement, speaking in synagogues and public meetings. (Deutsch testifies that after 1882 P. Axelrod himself contributed to palestinophilia…[10])

Of course, Smolenskin is one of the passionate apostles of the return to Palestine: bubbling and lively, he connects with Anglo-Jewish political actors, but he comes up against the opposition of the Alliance, who does not want to promote the colonisation of Palestine, but rather to direct the migratory wave towards America. He then describes the tactics of the Alliance as "betrayal of the cause of the people." His premature death cut his efforts short.[11]

We note, however, that this movement towards Palestine was rather weakly received by the Jews of Russia; it was even thwarted. "The idea of a political revival of the Jewish people brought a small handful of intellectuals behind it at the time, and it soon came up against fierce adversaries."[12] The conservative circles, the rabbinate and the *Tzadikim*[*] saw in this current towards Palestine an attack on the divine will, "an attack on faith in the Messiah who alone must bring the Jews back to Palestine. As for the progressive assimilationists, they saw in this current a reactionary desire to isolate the Jews from the rest of enlightened humanity."[13]

The Jews of Europe did not support the movement either.

Meanwhile, on site, the success of the return was revealed to be "too mitigated": "many colonists discovered their incompetence in the work of the land"; "the ideal of rebirth of the ancient country was crumbling into petty acts of pure benevolence"; "The colonies survived only because of the subsidies sent by Baron Rothschild." And in the early 1990s, "colonisation went through… a serious crisis due to an anarchic system of land purchase" and a decision by Turkey (the

owner of Palestine) to ban the Jews of Russia from disembarking in Palestinian ports.[14]

It was at this time that the publicist, thinker and organiser Asher Ginzberg became known, under the eloquent pseudonym of Ahad Haam ("One of His People"). He strongly criticised practical palestinophilia as it had been constituted; what he advocated was, "before striving for a renaissance on a territory", to worry about "a 'rebirth of hearts', an intellectual and moral improvement of the people": "to install at the centre of Jewish life, a living and spiritual aspiration, a desire for national cohesion, revival and free development in a national spirit, but on the basis of all men."[15] This will later be called "spiritual Zionism" (but not "religious", and this is important).

That same year, 1889, in order to unite among them those who were dear to the idea of a rebirth of national feeling, Ahad Haam founded a league—or, as it is called—an *order*: Bne-Moshe[*] ("The sons of Moses"), whose status "resembled strongly those of the Masonic lodges; the applicant made the solemn promise of strictly executing all the demands of order; the new members were initiated by a master, the "big brother"; the neophyte undertook to serve without reserve the ideal of national rebirth, even if there was little hope that this ideal would be realised any time soon."[16] It was stipulated in the manifesto of order that "national consciousness takes precedence over religious consciousness, personal interests are subject to national interests," and it was recommended that a feeling of unreserved love for Judaism, placed above all other objectives of the movement. Thus was prepared "the ground for the reception of political Zionism" of Herzl[17]… of which Ahad Haam absolutely did not want.

He made several trips to Palestine: in 1891, 1893, and 1900. Regarding colonisation, he denounced an anarchic character and an insufficient rootedness in tradition.[18] He "severely criticised the dictatorial conduct of Baron Rothschild's emissaries."[19]

This is how Zionism was born in Europe, a decade behind Russia. The first leader of Zionism, Theodor Herzl, had been, until the age of thirty-six (he only lived to forty-four), a writer, a playwright, a journalist. He had never been interested in Jewish history or, *a fortiori*, in the Hebrew language, and, characteristically, as a good Austrian liberal, he considered the aspirations of the various "ethnic minorities" of the Austro-Hungarian Empire to self-determination and national existence to be *reactionary*, and found it normal to stifle them.[20] As Stefan Zweig writes, Herzl cherished the dream of seeing the Jews of Vienna enter the cathedral in order to be baptised and seeing the Jewish question resolved once and for all by the fusion of Judaism and Christianity. But anti-Jewish sentiments developed in Austria-Hungary in parallel with the rise of Pan-Germanism, while in Paris, where Herzl resided at the time, the Dreyfus affair broke out. Herzl had the opportunity to witness the "public degradation of Captain Dreyfus"; convinced of his innocence, he was deeply shaken and changed his course. "If separation is inevitable," he said, "well, let it be radical! … If we suffer from being without a country, let us build ourselves a homeland!"[21] Herzl then had a revelation: it was necessary to create a Jewish state! "As if struck by lightning, Herzl was enlightened by this new idea: anti-Semitism is not a fortuitous phenomenon subject to particular conditions, it is a permanent evil, it is the eternal companion of the eternal errant," and "'the only possible solution to the Jewish question', is a sovereign Jewish state."[22] (To conceive such a project after nearly two thousand years of diaspora, what imaginative power one needed, what exceptional audacity!) However, according to S. Zweig, Herzl's pamphlet entitled *A Jewish State* received from the Viennese *bourgeoisie* a welcome "perplexed and irritated… What's gotten into this writer, so intelligent, so cultivated and spiritual? Our language is German and not Hebrew, our homeland—beautiful Austria", Herzl, "does he not give our worst enemies arguments against us: he wants to isolate us?" Consequently, "Vienna… abandoned him and laughed at him. But the answer came to him from elsewhere; it burst forth like a thunderbolt, so sudden, charged with such a weight of passion and such ecstasy that he was almost frightened to have awakened, around the world, a movement with his dozens of pages, a movement so powerful and through which he found himself overwhelmed. His answer did not come to him, it is true, from the Jews of the West… but from the formidable masses of the East. Herzl, with his pamphlet, had inflamed this nucleus of Judaism, which was smouldering under the ashes of the stranger."[23]

Henceforth, Herzl gives himself body and soul to his new idea. He "breaks off with those closest to him, he only frequents the Jewish people… He who, even recently, despised politics, now founds a political movement; he introduces to it a spirit and a party discipline, forms the framework of a future army and transforms the [Zionist] congresses into a true parliament of the Jewish people." At the first Congress of Basel in 1897 he produced a very strong impression "on

the Jews who were meeting for the first time in a parliamentary role," and "during his very first speech, he was unanimously and enthusiastically proclaimed… leader and chief of the Zionist movement." He shows "a consummate art to find the formulas of conciliation", and, conversely, "the one who criticises his objective… or merely blames certain measures taken by him…, that one is the enemy not only of Zionism, but of the entire Jewish people."[24]

The energetic writer Max Nordau (Suedfeld) supported him by expressing the idea that emancipation is fallacious, since it has introduced seeds of discord into the Jewish world: the emancipated Jew believes that he really has found a homeland, when "all that is living and vital in Judaism, which represents the Jewish ideal, the courage and the ability to advance, all this is none other than Zionism."[25]

At this 1st Congress, the delegates of Russian Zionism "constituted one third of the participants… 66 out of 197." In the eyes of some, their presence could be regarded as a gesture of opposition to the Russian government. To Zionism had adhered all of the Russian Khovevei-Tsion, "thus contributing to the establishment of global Zionism."[26] Thus "Zionism drew its strength from the communities of oppressed Jews in the East, having found only limited support among the Jews of Western Europe."[27] But it also followed that the Russian Zionists represented for Herzl a most serious opposition. Ahad Haam waged a fierce struggle against Herzl's political Zionism (alongside the majority of the palestinophiles), strongly criticising the pragmatism of Herzl and Nordau, and denouncing what he called "their indifference to the spiritual values of Judaic culture and tradition."[28] He found chimeric the hope of political Zionism to found an autonomous Jewish *state in the near future*; he regarded all this movement as extremely detrimental to the cause of the spiritual rebirth of the nation… "They do not care about the salvation of Judaism in perdition because they care nothing about spiritual and cultural heritage; they aspire not to the *rebirth* of the ancient nation, but to the *creation* of a new people from the dispersed particles of ancient matter."[29] (If he uses and even emphasises the word "Judaism," it is almost evident that it is not in the sense of the Judaic religion, but in the sense of the spiritual system inherited from ancestors. The *Jewish Encyclopædia* tells us about Ahad Haam that in the 70s, "he was more and more imbued with rationalism and deviated from religion."[30] If the only vocation for Palestine is to "become the spiritual centre that could unite, by national and spiritual ties, the dispersed nations,"[31] a centre which "would pour out its 'light' on the Jews of the whole world", would create "a new spiritual bond between the scattered members of the people", it would be less a "State of the Jews" than "an elite spiritual community."[32]

Discussions agitated the Zionists. Ahad Haam strongly criticised Herzl whom Nordau supported by accusing Ahad Haam of "covert Zionist". World Zionist congresses were held every year; in 1902 took place the one of the Russian Zionists in Minsk, and the discussions resumed. This is where Ahad Haam read his famous exposition: A spiritual rebirth.[33]

Zionism no longer met with amenity from the outside. Herzl expected this: as soon as the program of the Zionists would take a concrete form and as soon as the real departure to Palestine began, anti-Semitism everywhere would end. But long before this result was reached, "stronger than others, the voice of those who… feared that the taking of a public position in the nationalist sense of an assimilated Jew would give antisemites the opportunity to say that every assimilated Jew hides under his mask an authentic Jew… incapable of blending into the local population."[34] And as soon as an independent state was created, the Jews went everywhere to be suspected and accused of civic disloyalty, ideological isolationism—which their enemies had always suspected and accused them of.

In reply, at the Second Zionist Congress (1898), Nordau declared: "We reject with disdain the name of 'party'; the Zionists are not a party, they are the Jewish people themselves… Those who, on the contrary, are at ease in servitude and contempt, they keep themselves carefully apart, unless they fight us fiercely."[35]

As one English historian observes: Yes, "Zionism has done a great service to the Jews by restoring them a sense of dignity," and yet "it leaves unresolved the question of their attitude towards the countries in which they live."[36]

In Austria, a compatriot of Herzl, Otto Weininger, argued with him: "Zionism and Judaism are incompatible with the fact that Zionism intends to force the Jews to take upon themselves the responsibility of a state of their own, which

contradicts the very essence of every Jew." And he predicted the failure of Zionism.

In Russia in 1899, I. M. Biekerman argued strongly against Zionism, as an idea deemed "quacky, inspired by anti-Semitism, of reactionary inspiration and harmful by nature"; it is necessary "to reject the illusions of the Zionists and, without in any way renouncing the spiritual particularism of the Jews, struggle hand in hand with the cultural and progressive forces of Russia in the name of the regeneration of the common fatherland."[38]

At the beginning of the century, the poet N. Minsky had issued this criticism: Zionism marks the loss of the notion of universal man, it lowers the cosmopolitan dimensions, the universal vocation of Judaism to the level of an ordinary nationalism. "The Zionists, speaking tirelessly of nationalism, turn away from the genuinely national face of Judaism and in fact seek only to be like everyone else, not worse than others."[39]

It is interesting to compare these sentences with the remark made before the revolution by the orthodox thinker S. Bulgakov: "The biggest difficulty for Zionism is that it is not able to recover the lost faith of the fathers, and it is obliged to rely on a principle that is either national, cultural or ethnic, a principle on which no genuine great nation can rely exclusively."[40]

But the first Russian Zionists—now, "it is from Russia that most of the founders of the State of Israel and the pioneers of the State of Israel came out,"[41] and it was in Russian that "were written the best pages of Zionist journalism"[42]—were filled with an irrepressible enthusiasm for the idea of returning to their people the lost homeland, the ancient land of the Bible and their ancestors, to create a State of unparalleled quality and to have men of exceptional quality grow there.

And this impulse, this call addressed to all to turn to physical work, the work of the earth!—Does not this appeal echo the exhortations of a Tolstoy, the doctrine of *asceticism*?[43]

All streams lead to the sea.

*

But, in the final analysis, how can a Zionist behave towards the country in which he resides for the time being?

For the Russian Zionists who devoted all their strength to the Palestinian dream, it was necessary to exclude themselves from the affairs that agitated Russia as such. Their statutes stipulated: "Do not engage in politics, neither internal nor external." They could only weakly, without conviction, take part in the struggle for equal rights in Russia. As for participating in the national liberation movement?—but that would be pulling the chestnuts out of the fire for the others![44]

Such tactics drew Jabotinsky's fiery reproaches: "Even passing travellers have an interest in the inn being clean and tidy."[45]

And then, in *what language* should the Zionists display their propaganda? They did not know Hebrew, and, anyway, who would have understood it? Consequently: either in Russian or in Yiddish. And this brought closer once more the radicals of Russia[46] and the Jewish revolutionaries.

Evidently, the Jewish revolutionary youth jousted with the Zionists: no and no! The solution of the Jewish question does not lie in the departure out of Russia, it is in the political fight for equal rights here! Instead of going to settle far beyond the seas, we must make use of the possibility of affirming ourselves here in this country. And their arguments could not avoid shaking more than one by their clarity.

In the Bolshevik circles, the Zionists were denounced as "reactionary"; they were treated as "the party of the

darkest, most desperate pessimism."

Inevitably, intermediate currents were to emerge. Thus the Zionist party of the left Poalei-Tsion ("Workers of Zion"). It was in Russia that it was founded in 1899; it combined "socialist ideology with political Zionism." It was an attempt to find a median line between those concerned exclusively with class problems and those concerned only with national problems. "Profound disagreements existed within Poalei-Tsion on the question of participation in revolutionary action in Russia."[48] (And the revolutionaries themselves were divided, some leaning towards the Social-Democrats, others towards the Social Revolutionaries.)

"Other Tseirei-Tsion groups, ideologically close to non-Marxist socialist Zionism, began to form from 1905 onwards."[49] In 1904, a split within Poalei-Tsion gave birth to a new party, the "Socialist Zionists", breaking with the ideal of Palestine: the extension of Yiddish as a spoken language to all Jewish masses, that is quite sufficient, and we scorn the idea of national autonomy! Zionism begins to take on a *bourgeois* and reactionary tint. What is needed is to create from it a socialist movement, to awaken revolutionary political instincts in the Jewish masses. The party "strongly supported" the "social and economic content" of Zionism, but denied the need to "revive the land of Judea, culture, Hebrew traditions." Granted, Jewish emigration is too chaotic, it must be oriented towards a specific territory, but "there is no essential link between Zionism and Palestine." The Hebrew state must be based on socialist and non-capitalist foundations. Such an emigration is a long-term historical process; the bulk of the Jewish masses will remain well into the future in their current places of residence. "The party has approved the participation of the Jews in the political struggle in Russia"[50]—that is to say, in the struggle for their rights in this country. As for Judaism and faith, they despised them.

All this mishmash had to generate a "socialist Jewish" group called "Renaissance", which "believed that the national factor is progressive by nature", and in 1906 the members of this group who had broken with the Zionists Socialist Party constituted the Soviet Socialist Workers' Party, the SERP. (They were called *serpoviys* or *seymovtsy*, for they demanded the election of a Jewish national Sejm—*Seim*—intended to be the "supreme organ of Jewish national self-government."[51]) For them, Russian and Hebrew were, in their capacity of languages of use, equal. And by advocating "autonomism" within the Russian state, the SERP, socialist, was distinguished from the Bund, also socialist.[52]

In spite of the disagreements that divided the Zionists among themselves, a general shift of Zionism towards socialism took place in Russia, which attracted the attention of the Russian government. Until then, it had not interfered with Zionist propaganda, but in 1903 Interior Minister Plehve addressed the governors of the provinces and to the mayors of the big cities a bulletin stating that the Zionists had relegated to the background the idea of leaving Palestine and had concentrated on the organisation of Jewish life in their places of residence, that such direction could not be tolerated and that consequently any public propaganda in favour of Zionism would now be prohibited, as well as meetings, conferences, etc.[53]

Made aware of this, Herzl (who had already solicited an audience with Nicholas II in 1899) went immediately to Saint Petersburg to ask to be received by Plehve. (It was just after the Kichinev pogrom, which occurred in the spring, of which Plehve had been strongly accused—and which had therefore attracted him the blame and invectives of the Russian Zionists…)

Plehve made Herzl understand (according to the latter's notes) that the Jewish question for Russia is grave, if not vital, and "we endeavour to solve it correctly… the Russian State wishes to have a homogeneous population", and it demands a patriotic attitude from all… "We want to assimilate [the Jews], but assimilation… is slow… I am not the enemy of the Jews. I know them well, I spent my youth in Warsaw and, as a child, I always played with Jewish children. I would very much like to do something for them. I do not want to deny that the situation of the Jews of Russia is not a happy one. If I were a Jew, I, too, would probably be an opponent of the government." "The formation of a Jewish State [accommodating] several million immigrants would be extremely desirable for us. That does not mean, however, that we want to lose all our Jewish citizens. Educated and wealthy people, we would gladly keep them. The destitute without education, we would gladly let them go. We had nothing against Zionism as long as it preached emigration, but now "we note great changes"[54] in its goals. The Russian government sees with a kindly eye the immigration of Zionists to

Palestine, and if the Zionists return to their initial plans, they are ready to support them in the face of the Ottoman Empire. But it cannot tolerate the propagation of Zionism, which advocates a separatism of national inspiration within Russia itself[55]: this would entail the formation of a group of citizens to whom patriotism, which is the very foundation of the State, would be foreign. (According to N. D. Lyubimov, who was then director of the minister's cabinet, Plehve told him that Herzl, during the interview, had recognised that Western bankers were helping the revolutionary parties of Russia. Sliosberg, however, thinks this is unlikely.[56])

Plehve made his report to the Emperor, the report was approved, and Herzl received a letter of confirmation in the same vein.

He felt that his visit to Plehve had been a success.

Neither of them suspected that they had only eleven months left to live…

Turkey had no intention of making any concessions to the Zionists, and the British Government, in that same year of 1905, proposed that not Palestine, but Uganda, be colonised.

In August 1903, at the Sixth Congress of the Zionists in Basel, Herzl was the spokesperson for this variant "which, of course, is not Zion", but which could be accepted on a provisional basis, in order for a Jewish state to be created as quickly as possible.[57]

This project provoked stormy debates. It seems that it met with some support, in the *Yishuv*, for new immigrants, discouraged by the harsh living conditions in Palestine. The Russian Zionists—who claimed to have more than all the need to quickly find a refuge—fiercely opposed the project. Headed by M. M. Oussychkine (founder of the Biluim group and, later, the right-hand man of Ahad Haam in the Bne-Moshe League), they recalled that Zionism was inseparable from Zion and that nothing could replace it![58]

Congress nevertheless constituted a commission to travel to Uganda to study the land.[59] The Seventh Congress, in 1905, heard its report, and the Ugandan variant was rejected.[60] Overcome by all these obstacles, Herzl succumbed to a heart attack before he knew the final decision.[61]

But this new dilemma provoked a new rupture in Zionism: they split the so-called "territorialists", led by Israel Zangwill, to which joined the English delegates. They established their International Council; the latter held its meetings, receiving subsidies from Jacob Schiffe and Baron Rothschild. They had given up demanding "Palestine and nothing else". Yes, it was necessary to carry out a mass colonisation by the Jews, but wherever it was. Year after year, in their research, they reviewed a dozen countries. They almost selected Angola, but "Portugal is too weak, it will not be able to defend the Jews", and therefore "the Jews risk becoming the victims of the neighbouring tribes."[62]

They were even ready to accept territory within Russia even if they could create an autonomous entity with an independent administration.

This argument: a strong country must be able to defend immigrants on the premises of their new residence, reinforced those who insisted on the need to *quickly* establish an independent state capable of hosting mass immigration. This was suggested—and would suggest later—Max Nordau when he said that he was not afraid of the "economic unpreparedness of the country [that is, of Palestine] for the reception of newcomers."[63] However, for this, it was necessary to be get the better of Turkey, and also find a solution to the Arab problem. The adherents of this program understood that, in order to implement it, it was necessary to have recourse to the assistance of powerful allies. Now this assistance, no country, for the moment, proposed it.

To arrive at the creation of the State of Israel, we must go through two more world wars.

Footnotes

1. *V. Jabotinsky*, O natsionalnom vospitanii (From the Education of National Sentiment), Sb. Felietony (Collection of Serials). Saint Petersburg. Typography "Herold", 1913, pp. 5–7.
2. JE*, t. 14, pp. 403–404.
3. *I.L. Klauzner*, Literatura na ivril v Rossii (Literature in Modern Hebrew in Russia). BJWR, p. 506.
4. JE, 1.12, p. 259.
5. *Ibidem*, t. 13, p. 639.

- Title of his famous work.

6. *Ibidem*, t. 12, pp. 526–527; *Hessen**, t. 2, pp. 233–234; *G. Svet*, Rousskiie evrei v sionizme i v stroilelstve Palestiny i Izrailia (The Jews of Russia in Zionism and the Edification of Palestine and Israel). BJWR-1 *, pp. 244–245.
7. JE*, t. 12, pp. 259–260.

- A pioneering Zionist movement founded before Herzl.
    - Herem (Hebrew word): the status of one who is cut off from the community due to impurity or consecration. The individual in state of Herem is an outlaw. A kind of excommunication.

8. *M. Wartburg*, Plata za sionism (The Wage of Zionism), in "22": Obschestvenno-politicianski i liieratournyi journal evreiskoi intelligenlsii iz SSSR V Izraile ("22": politico-social and literary review of the Jewish intelligentsia emigrated from USSR to Israel), Tel Aviv, 1987, No. 56, pp. 112–114; *Svet*, SJE-1, pp. 235–243.
9. JE, t. 4, pp. 577–579; *Warthurg*, in "22", 1987, no. 56, p. 115.
10. *L. Deulsch*, King evreiev v rousskom revolioutsionnom dvijenii (The role of the Jews in The Russian revolutionary movement), t. 1, 2nd ed., ML., 1925, pp. 5, 161.
11. JE, t. 14, pp. 406–407.
12. *Hessen*, t. 2, p. 234.

- Tzadikim (Hebrew word): the righteous.

13. JE, t. 12, p. 261.
14. *Ibidem*, pp. 261–262.
15. JE*, t. 3, pp. 480–482.

- * Association founded by Ahad Haam in Odessa.

16. *Ibidem*, t. 4, pp. 683–684.
17. *Svet*, op. cit., pp. 250–251.
18. JE, t. 3, p. 481.
19. SJE, t. 1, pp. 248–249.
20. JE, t. 6, pp. 407–409.
21. *Stefan Zweig*, Vtchrachnii mir. Vospominaniia evropeitsa (The world of yesterday: Memories of a European), in "22", 1994, No. 92, pp. 215–216.
22. JE, t. 6, p. 409.
23. *Zweig*, in "22", op. cil., pp. 216–217.
24. JE, t. 6, pp. 410–411.
25. JE, 1.11, pp. 788–792.
26. SJE, t. 7, p. 940.
27. *J. Parks*, Evrei sredi narodov: Obzor pritchin anti-semitima (The Jews among Peoples: An Overview of the Causes of Anti-Semitism), Paris, YMCA Press, 1932, p. 45.
28. SJE, t. 1, p. 249.
29. JE, t. 3, p. 482.
30. SJE, I. 1, p. 248.
31. JE, 1.12, p. 262.
32. *Wartburg*, in "22", 1987, no. 56, pp. 116–117.
33. JE, t. 3, p. 482.
34. *Ibidem*, t. 6, p. 409.
35. *Ibidem**, t. 11, p. 792.
36. *Parks*, p. 186.
37. *N. Goulina*, Kto boilsa Otto Veiningcra? (Who's afraid of Otto Weininger?). In "22"*, 1983, No. 31, p. 206.

38. JE, t. 4, p. 556.
39. *N. Minsky*, Natsionalnyi lik i patriotism (The National Face and Patriotism), Slovo, Saint Petersburg, 1909, 28 March (10 April), p. 2.
40. *Prou S. Bulgakov*, Khristianstvo i evreiskij vopros (Christianity and the Jewish Question), Paris. YMCA Press, 1991, p. 11.
41. *F. Kolker*, Novyj plan pomoschi sovietskomou cvrcistvou (A new plan for aid to the Jews of Russia), in "22", 1983, No. 31, p. 149.
42. *N. Goulina*, V poiskakh outratchennoi samoidenlilikatsii (In Search of the Lost Self-Identity), in "22", 1983, No. 29, p. 216.
43. *Amos Oz*, Spischaia krasaviisa: griozy i pruboujdeniia (Sleeping Beauty: dreams and awakening), in "22", 1985, No. 42. p. 117
44. *G. J. laronson*, V borbe za granjdanskiie i nalsionalnyie prava: Obschestvennyie tetcheniia v rousskom evreistve (In the fight for civil and national rights: the social currents among the Jews of Russia), BJWR-1, pp. 218–219.
45. *Ibidem**, p. 219.
46. *Ibidem* pp. 219–220.
47. *S. Dimanstein*. Revolioulsionnyie dvijeniia sredi evreiev (The revolution among the Jews), Sb. 1905: Istoriia revolioutsionnogo dvijeniia v otdclnykh otcherkakh (Collection 1905: History of the revolutionary movement in separate essays), directed by N. Pokrovsky, vol. 3, book 1, M.L., 1927, pp. 107, 116.
48. SJE, t. 6, p. 551.
49. *Ibidem*, t. 7, p. 941.
50. *Ibidem**, pp. 1021–1022.
51. *Aronson*, SJE-1, pp. 226–229.
52. SJE, 1.1, p. 705, t. 7, p. 1021.
53. *S. Ginzburg*, Poezdka Teodora Gertzla v Petersburg (Theodor Herzl's trip to Saint Petersburg), JW, New York, Union of Russian Jews in New York, 1944, p. 199.
54. *Ibidem**, pp. 202–203.
55. SJE, t. 6, p. 533.
56. *G. B. Sliosberg*, Dela minouvehikh dnei: Zapiski ruskogo evreia (Notes of a Jew of Russia) in 3 vols., Paris, 1933–1934, t. 2, p. 301
57. JE*, t. 6, p. 412.
58. *Ibidem*, t. 15, p. 135.
59. *Ibidem*, t. 3, p. 679.
60. *Ibidem*, pp. 680–681.
61. JE, t. 6, p. 407.
62. *Ibidem*, t. 14, pp. 827–829.
63. SJE, t. 7, pp. 861–892.

Chapter 8

At the Turn of the 20th Century

It appears that after six years of reflection and hesitation, the Tsar Alexander III irrevocably chose, as of 1887, to contain the Jews of Russia by restrictions of a civil and political nature, and he held this position until his death.

The reasons were probably, on the one hand, the evident part played by the Jews in the revolutionary movement, on the other, the no less evident fact that many Jewish youths shunned military service: “only three quarters of those who should have been enrolled served in the army.”[1] One noticed “the ever-increasing number of Jews who did not respond to the appeal”, as well as the increasing amount of unpaid fines related to these absences: only 3 million rubles out of 30 million were returned annually to the funds of the State. (In fact, the government still had no accurate statistics on the Jewish population, its birth rate, its mortality rate before the age of 21. Let us remind that in 1876 [see Chapter 4], because of this absenteeism, there had been a restriction of the “favour accorded to certain persons by virtue of their family situation”—which meant that the only sons of Jewish families were now subjected, like the others, to general conscription, and as a result the proportion of Jewish conscripts had become greater than that of non-Jews. This situation was not corrected until the early 1900s under Nicolas II.[2])

As far as public education was concerned, the tsar’s wish, which he had formulated in 1885, was that the number of Jews admitted to institutions outside the Pale of Settlement was in the same ratio as the number of Jews in the total population. But the authorities pursued two aims simultaneously: not only to slow down the growing flow of Jews towards education, but also to fight against the revolution, to make the school, as it was called, “not a pool of revolutionaries, but a breeding ground for science.”[3] In the chancelleries, they were preparing a more radical measure which consisted of prohibiting access to education to elements likely to serve the revolution—a measure contrary to the spirit of Lomonosov[*] and profoundly vicious, prejudicial to the State itself: it was to deny the children of disadvantaged strata of the general population (the “sons of cooks”) admission to colleges. The formulation, falsely reasonable, falsely decent, was: “Leave the school principals free to accept only children who are in the care of persons who can guarantee them good supervision at home and provide them with all that is necessary for the pursuit of their studies”—furthermore, in higher education establishments, it was planned to increase the right of access to classes.[4]

This measure provoked a strong outrage in liberal circles, but less violent and less lasting than the one that was instigated in 1887 by a new measure: the reduction of the number of Jews admitted to high schools and universities. It was originally planned to publish these two provisions within the framework of the same law. But the Council of Ministers opposed it, arguing that “the publication of a general decision accompanied by restrictions for the Jews could be misinterpreted.” In June 1887, therefore, only a part was promulgated, the one that concerned non-Jews: “Measures aiming to regulate the contingent of pupils in secondary and higher education”—measures directed in fact against the common people… As for the reduction of the quota of the Jews, it was entrusted to the Minister of Education, Delianov, who implemented it in July 1887 by a bulletin addressed to the rectors of school boards. He fixed for the secondary and higher schools the *numerus clausus* of the Jews at 10% for the Pale of Settlement, 5% outside it, and 3% in the two capitals.

“Following the example of the Ministry of Public Instruction”, other organisations began to introduce “quotas of admission into their institutions, and some were closed down to the Jews.” (Such as the Higher School of Electricity, the Saint Petersburg School of Communication, and, most strikingly, the Academy of Military Medicine which temporarily prohibited, but “for many years”, its access to Jews.[5])

This *numerus clausus* law, which had not been established during the ninety-three years of massive presence of Jews in Russia and which was to continue for twenty-nine years (practically until 1916) struck the Jewish society of Russia all the more painfully because in the years 1870–1880 there had been a “remarkable impulse of the Jews to enter schools and colleges”, a phenomenon which Sliosberg in particular explains is “not due to the realisation of the masses

of the necessity of education… but rather due to the fact that, for a Jew without capital, figuring out how to deploy one's forces in the economic field was very difficult, and due to the fact that conscription became compulsory for all, but that there were dispensations for the students." Thus, if only well-to-do Jewish youth had studied before, a "Jewish student proletariat" was now being created; if among the Russians, now as in the past, it was the favoured social classes that received higher education, among the Jews, in addition to the wealthy, young people from the underprivileged classes began to study.[6]

We would like to add that in those years there had been a turning-point in the whole world and in all fields of culture, towards a no longer elitist but generalised education—and the Jews, particularly intuitive and receptive, had been the first to feel it, at least instinctively. But how can we find a way to satisfy, without causing friction, without clashes, the constant and increasing aspiration of the Jews to education? In view of the fact that the indigenous population, in its mass, remained fairly asleep and backward, how to avoid prejudice to the development of either side?

Of course, the objective of the Russian government was the struggle against the revolution, for among the student youth many Jews had been noticed by their activism and their total rejection of the regime in place. However, when we know the enormous influence exerted by Pobedonostsev[*] during the reign of Alexander III, it must be admitted that the aim was also to defend the Russian nation against the imbalance that was to occur in the field of education. This is what testifies the Baron Morits von Hirsch, a big Jewish banker who visited Russia and to whom Pobedonostsev expressed his point of view: the policy of the government is inspired not by the idea that the Jews are a "threat", but by the fact that, rich in their multi-millennial culture, they are more spiritually and intellectually powerful than the still ignorant and unpolished Russian people—that is why measures had to be taken to balance the "low capacity of the local population to resist." (And Pobedonostsev asked Hirsch, known for his philanthropy, to promote the education of the Russian people in order to realise the equal rights of the Jews of Russia. According to Sliosberg, Baron Hirsch allocated one million rubles to private schools.[7])

Like any historical phenomenon, this measure can be viewed from various angles, particularly from the two different angles that follow.

For a young Jewish student, the most elementary fairness seemed flouted: he had shown capacities, application, he had to be admitted… But he was not! Obviously, for these gifted and dynamic young people, to encounter such a barrier was more than mortifying; the brutality of such a measure made them indignant. Those who had hitherto been confined to the trades of commerce and handicrafts were now prevented from accessing ardently desired studies that would lead to a better life.

Conversely, the "native population" did not see in these quotas a breach of the principle of equality, on the contrary, even. The institutions in question were financed by the public treasury, and therefore by the whole population, and if the Jews were more numerous, it meant that it was at the expense of all; and it was known that, later on, educated people would enjoy a privileged position in society. And the other ethnic groups, did they also have to have a proportional representation within the "educated layer"? Unlike all the other peoples of the empire, the Jews now aspired almost *exclusively* to education, and in some places this could mean that the Jewish contingent in schools exceeded 50%. The *numerus clausus* was unquestionably instituted to protect the interests of Russians and ethnic minorities, certainly not to bully the Jews. (In the 20s of the twentieth century, a similar approach was sought in the United States to limit the Jewish contingent in universities, and immigration quotas were also established—but we shall come back to this. Moreover, the matter of quotas, put today in terms of "no less than"[*], has become a burning issue in America.)

In practice, there have been many exceptions to the application of the *numerus clausus* in Russia. The first to avoid it were *girls'* high schools: "In most high schools for young girls, the quotas were not current, nor in several public higher education establishments: the conservatories of Saint Petersburg and Moscow, the School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture of Moscow, the Kiev School of Commerce, etc."[8] *A fortiori* quotas were not applied in any private establishment; and these were numerous and of high quality.[9] (For example, at the Kirpitchnikova High School, one of the best high schools in Moscow, a quarter of the students were Jewish.[10] They were numerous at the famous Polivanovskaya high school in Moscow, and the Androyeva girls' school in Rostov, where my mother was a pupil, there

were in her class more than half of Jewish girls.) Business schools (under the Ministry of Finance), to which Jewish children were eager to register, were initially opened to them without any restrictions, and those which took place after 1895 were relatively light (for example: in commercial schools in the Pale of Settlement, financed out of private funds, the number of Jews admitted depended on the amount of money allocated by Jewish merchants for the maintenance of these schools, and in many of them the percentage of Jewish students was 50% or more).

If the official standard was strictly observed at the time of admission to the secondary classes, it was often largely overstepped in the larger classes. Sliosberg explains this notably by the fact that the Jewish children who entered high school pursued it to the end, whereas the non-Jews often gave up their studies before completion. This is why, in large classes, there were often much more than 10% Jewish pupils.[11] He confirmed that they were numerous, for example, at the Poltava high school. Out of 80 boys, eight were Jewish.[12] In the boys 'schools of Mariupol, at the time when there was already a local Duma, about 14 to 15% of the pupils were Jewish, and in girls' high schools, the proportion was even higher.[13] In Odessa, where Jews constituted one-third of the population,[14] they were in 1894, 14% in the prestigious Richelieu high school, more than 10% in the gymnasium No. 2, 37% in gymnasium No. 3; in girls' high schools the proportion was of 40%; in business schools, 72%, and in university, 19%.[15]

To the extent that financial means permitted it, no obstacle prevented this thirst for education. "In a number of secondary schools in the central Russian provinces there were few Jewish pupils at that time, and parents took the opportunity to send their children there… The wealthiest parents had their children home schooled: they prepared for examinations to enter the next grade and thus reached this way the senior year."[16] In the period between 1887 and 1909, Jewish children were free to pass the school-leaving examinations, and "they graduated as equals those who had followed the curriculum."[17] The majority of "external" pupils were Jewish. A family like that of Jacob Marchak (a jeweller with no great fortune, the father of the poet[*]), whose five children had a higher education, was not uncommon before the revolution.

Moreover, "private establishments were opened everywhere, whether mixed for the Jews and Christians, or for the Jews only… Some of these establishments enjoyed the same rights as public establishments; the others were authorised to issue certificates entitling them to enrol in higher educational establishments."[18] "A network of private Jewish settlements was established, which formed the basis of a national-type education,"[19] "The Jews were also oriented towards higher education establishments abroad: a large part of them, on their return to Russia, passed examinations before the State Commissions."[20] Sliosberg himself observed that in the 80s, at the University of Heidelberg that "the majority of Russian listeners were Jews" and that some, among them, did not have their bachelor's degree.[21]

One can rightly wonder whether the restrictions, dictated by fear in front of the revolutionary moods of the students, did not contribute to feeding said moods. If these were not aggravated by indignation at the *numerus clausus*, and by contacts maintained abroad with political emigrants.

What happened in Russian universities after the publication of the bulletin? There was no sharp fall, but the number of Jews decreased almost every year, from 13.8% in 1893 to 7% in 1902. The proportion of Jews studying at the universities of Saint Petersburg and Moscow remained no less than the imposed 3% norm throughout the period of validity of the said standard.[22]

Minister Delianov acceded more than once to the requests submitted to him, and authorised admission to university beyond the *numerus clausus*.[23] This was how "hundreds of students" were admitted. (Delianov's flexibility will succeed later the rigidity of Minister Bogolepov—and it is not excluded that this may have contributed to making him the target of terrorists[*].[24]) Sliosberg gives this overview: the percentage in the superior courts of medicine for women outweighed that of the Academy of Military Medicine and that of the university, and "all the Jewish girls of the empire poured in." Several hundred Jews were enrolled at the School of Psycho-neuropathology in Saint Petersburg, where they could enter without a baccalaureate, and so they were thousands over the years. It was called the School of Neuropathology, but it also housed a faculty of law. The Imperial Conservatory of Saint Petersburg was "filled with Jewish students of both sexes." In 1911, a private mining school opened in Ekaterinoslav.[25]

Admission to specialised schools, such as that of health officers, was done with great freedom. J. Teitel says that at the Saratov school of nurses (of high quality, very well equipped) Jews from the Pale of Settlement were admitted without any limitation—and without prior authorisation issued by the police for the displacement. Those who were admitted thus received full rights. This practice was confirmed by the governor of Saratov at that time, Stolypin. Thus the proportion of Jewish students could rise to 70%. In the other technical colleges of Saratov, Jews from the Pale of Settlement were admitted without any norm, and many of them continued their studies in higher education… From the Pale of Settlement also came "a mass of external pupils that did not find their place in university, and for whom the Jewish community of the city struggled to find work."[26]

To all this it should be added that the number of establishments where the teaching was delivered in Hebrew was not limited. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century there were 25,000 primary schools (*Heder*) with 363,000 pupils in the Pale of Settlement (64% of all Jewish children).[27] It is true that in 1883 the old "Jewish establishments of the State" were closed due to having no use: no one went there any more. (But note: the opening of these institutions was once interpreted by the Jewish publicists as an act and a ruse of the "adverse reaction", and today their closure was also the "act of adverse reaction"!)

In summary: the admission quotas did not hinder the Jews' aspiration to education. Nor did they contribute to raising the educational level of the non-Jewish peoples of the empire; they only aroused bitterness and rage among the Jewish youth. But this, in spite of the prohibitions, was going to constitute an intelligentsia of vanguard. It was the immigrants from Russia who formed the nucleus of the first intellectual elite of the future State of Israel. (How many times do we read in the *Russian Jewish Encyclopædia* the notices "son of small craftsman", "son of small trader", "son of merchant", and, further on, "completed university"?)

The university diploma initially conferred the right to reside throughout the empire and to serve in the administration (later, access to education in academies, universities and public schools was once again limited). Graduates of the Faculty of Medicine—doctors and pharmacists—were allowed to "reside anywhere, whether they practised their profession or not," and like all those who had completed a higher degree, they could even "devote themselves to commerce or other trades", "be members of the merchant corps without having previously spent five years in the first guild in the Pale of Settlement" as was required of other merchants. "The Jews holding the title of Doctor of Medicine" could practice their profession in any district of the empire, hire a medical secretary and two aides among their co-religionists by bringing them from the Pale of Settlement. The right to reside in any place, as well as the right to trade, was attributed to all those who practised paramedical professions without having completed a higher education—dentists, nurses, midwives. As from 1903, a requirement was added: that these persons should mandatorily practise their field of specialisation.[28]

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Restrictions also affected the bar, the independent body of lawyers set up in 1864. This profession paved the way for a successful career, both financially and personally, and to convey one's ideas: advocacy by lawyers in court were not subject to any censorship, they were published in the press, so that the speakers enjoyed greater freedom of expression than the newspapers themselves. They exploited it widely for social criticism and for the "edification" of society. The class of solicitors had transformed themselves in a quarter of a century into a powerful force of opposition: one should remember the triumphal acquittal of Vera Zasulich in 1878.[*] (The moral laxity of the lawyers' argumentation at the time strongly worried Dostoevsky: he explained it in his writings.[**]) Within this influential brotherhood, the Jews quickly occupied a preponderant place, revealing themselves to be the most gifted of all. When, in 1889, the Council of the Sworn Attorneys of Saint Petersburg published "for the first time in its report the data concerning the number of Jews in this trade," the great Saint Petersburg lawyer A. J. Passover "renounced the title of member of the Council and was no longer a candidate for election."[29]

In the same year 1889, the Minister of Justice, Manasseine, presented a report to Tsar Alexander III; it was stated that "the bar is invaded by the Jews, who supplant the Russians; they apply their own methods and violate the code of

ethics to which sworn-in attorneys must obey." (The document does not provide any clarification.[30]) In November 1889, on the orders of the tsar, a provision was made, supposedly provisionally (and consequently able to escape the legal procedure), requiring that "the admission to the numbers of those avowed and delegated authorities of non-Christian confession… will be henceforth, and until promulgation of a special law on the subject, possible only with the authorisation of the Minister of Justice."[31] But as apparently neither the Moslems nor the Buddhists availed themselves in large numbers of the title of lawyer, this provision proved to be *de facto* directed against the Jews.

From that year onwards, and for another fifteen years, practically no unbaptised Jew received this authorisation from the minister, not even such brilliant personalities—and future great advocates—as M. M. Winaver[***] or O. O. Gruzenberg: they remained confined for a decade and a half in the role of "law clerks". (Winaver even pleaded more than once in the Senate, and was very much listened to.) The "clerks" in fact pleaded with the same freedom and success as the attorneys themselves: here, there were no restrictions.[32]

In 1894, the new Minister of Justice, N. V. Muraviev, wanted to give this temporary prohibition the value of permanent law. His argument was as follows: "The real danger is not the presence in the body of lawyers of a certain number of people of Jewish faith who have rejected to a large extent the notions contrary to the Christian norms which pertain to their nation, but it is in the fact that the number of such persons becomes so great that they are likely to acquire a preponderant importance and to exert an adverse influence on the general level of morality and on the activities of that corporation."[33] In the bill, it was advocated that the proportion of non-Christian solicitors be limited in each jurisdiction to 10%. The tsar's government rejected this project—but, as Mr. Krohl said, "this idea… did not meet the condemnation it deserved in the Russian public opinion", and within the Society of Jurists of Saint Petersburg, "only a few people protested vigorously…; the rest, the vast majority, were clearly in favour of the draft at the time of its discussion."[34] This gives an unexpected insight into the state of mind of the capital's intelligentsia in the mid-90s. (In the Saint Petersburg jurisdiction, 13.5% of the attorneys were Jews, while in Moscow, less than 5%.[35])

The prohibition for the clerks of solicitors to become themselves avowed was felt all the more painfully because it followed limitations in the scientific careers and the service of the State.[36] It would not be lifted before 1904.

In the 80s, a limitation on the number of Jewish jurors was introduced in the provinces of the Pale of Settlement, so that they did not have a majority within the juries.

It was also from the 80s that the hiring of Jews in the judicial administration ceased. There were, however, exceptions to this: thus J. Teitel, who had been appointed shortly after his university studies, remained there twenty-five years. He finished his career ennobled with the civil rank of general. (It must be added that, later, Cheglovitov[*] forced him to retire "of his own free will.") In the exercise of his duties, he often had, he, the Israelite, to administer oaths to Orthodox witnesses, and he never met any objection from the clergy. J. M. Halpern, also an official in the judicial administration, had acceded to the high-ranking position of Deputy Director of the Ministry of Justice and to the rank of Secret Advisor.[37] Halpern sat on the Pahlen Commission in the capacity of expert. (Before that, the first prosecutor of the Senate had been G. I. Trahtenberg, and his deputy G. B. Sliosberg had initiated himself to defend the rights of the Jews.) He was also first prosecutor of the Senate S. J. Outine—but he was baptised and consequently, was not taken into account.

The religious criterion has never been a false pretence for the tsarist government, but has always been a real motive. It was because of this that the old believers[**], ethnically Russian, were ferociously persecuted for two and a half centuries, as well as, later, the Dukhobors[***] and the Molokanes[****], also Russians.

The baptised Jews were numerous in the service of the Russian State; we will not discuss it in this book. Let us quote under Nicholas I, the Count K. Nesselrod, who had a long career at the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Ludwig Chtiglits, who received the barony in Russia[38]; Maximilian Heine, brother of the poet and military doctor, who ended his career with the rank of state councillor; Governor General Bezak, General of the suite of His Majesty Adelbert, the Colonel of the Horse Guard Meves, the Hirs diplomats, one of whom was Minister under Alexander III.

Later, there was the Secretary of State Perets (grandson of the tax-collector Abram Perets), Generals Kaufman-Turkestansky and Khrulyov; The squire Salomon, director of the Alexandrovsky high school; Senators Gredinger, Posen; in the Police Department, Gurovich, Vissarionov, among many others.

Was the conversion to Christianity, especially to Lutheranism, in the eyes of some considered as easy? Are all the tracks open to you at once? Sliosberg observed at one point an "almost massive denial" on the part of young people.[40] But, of course, seen from the Jewish side, this appeared to be a grave betrayal, "a bonus to the abjuration of his faith… When we think of the number of Jews who resist the temptation to be baptised, one gains a great respect for this unhappy people."[41]

Formerly, it was with candour: we divided people into two categories, "ours" and "others," according to the criterion of faith alone. This state of mind, the Russian State, still reflected it in its dispositions. But, at the dawn of the twentieth century, could it not have thought a little and wondered whether such a procedure was morally permissible and practically effective? Could we continue to offer the Jews material welfare at the cost of denying their faith?

And then what advantage could be derived from Christianity? Many of these conversions were for pure convenience. (Some justified themselves by luring themselves: "I can thus be much more useful to my people."[42])

For those who had obtained equal rights in the service of the State, "there no longer existed any restriction of any kind whatsoever which prevented them from gaining access to hereditary nobility" and to receive the highest rewards. "The Jews were commonly enrolled without difficulty in genealogical records."[43] And even, as we see from the census of 1897, 196 members of the hereditary nobility counted *Hebrew* as their mother tongue (amongst the nobility in their personal capacities and the civil servants, they were 3,371 in the same case[44]). There even was, among the Brodsky, a family of modest artisans, Marshals of the nobility of the province of Ekaterinoslav.

But from the 70s of the nineteenth century onwards, Jews who sought positions in the administration of the State began to encounter obstacles (and this became worse from 1896 onwards); it must be said that few were those who aspired to this kind of routine and poorly paid activity. Moreover, from the 90s, the obstacles also affected the elective functions.

In 1890 a new Zemstvo Ordinance was issued, according to which the Jews were excluded from the self-management of the Zemstvo—in other words, outside the urban areas of the provinces and districts. It was planned to "not allow [the Jews] to participate in the electoral meetings and assemblies of the Zemstvos"[45] (these did not yet exist in the western provinces). The motivation was that "Jews, who usually pursue their particular interests, do not meet the demand for a real, living and social connection with local life."[46] At the same time, to work in the Zemstvo as an independent contractor, to the title of what was called the "outsider element" (element that would introduce into the Zemstvo, several years in advance, the explosive charge of radicalism), was not forbidden to Jews—and there they were many.

The restrictions in the Zemstvos did not affect the Jews of the central Russian provinces because the great majority of them resided in the cities and were more interested in urban administration. But in 1892 there appeared this time a new provision for cities: the Jews lost the right to elect and to be elected delegates to the Dumas and to the municipal offices, as well as to hold any office of responsibility, or conduct there economic and administrative services. This represented a more than sensible limitation. As delegates, Jews were admitted only in cities of the Pale of Settlement, but here too, subject to a restriction: no more than one-tenth of the number of the municipal duma, and again "on assignment" for the local administration that selected Jewish candidates—an annoying procedure, to say the least. (Particularly for *bourgeois* family men, as Sliosberg rightly points out: what a humiliation for them in relation to their children… how, after that, can they remain loyal to such a government?[47]) "There has been no harder time in the history of Russian Jews in Russia. They were expelled from all positions they had conquered."[48] In another passage, the same author speaks without ambiguity of the bribes received by the officials of the Ministry of the Interior to act in favour of the Jews.[49] (That was to soften somewhat the rigour of the times.)

Yes, the Jews of Russia were undoubtedly bullied, victims of inequality in civil rights. But this is what reminds us of the eminent Cadet V. A. Maklakov, who found himself in the emigration after the revolution: “The ‘inequality in rights’ of the Jews naturally lost its acuteness in a state where the enormous mass of the population (82%), that on which the prosperity of the country depended, the peasantry—dull, mute, submissive—was also *excluded* from common law, the same for all”[50]—and it stayed in the same situation after the abolition of serfdom; for it also, military service was inescapable, secondary and higher education inaccessible, and it did not obtain that self-administration, that rural Zemstvo which it much need. Another emigrant, D. O. Linsky, a Jew, even bitterly concluded that, in comparison with the levelling up of the soviets, when the entire population of Russia was deprived of all rights, “the inequality in the rights of the Jewish population before the revolution appears like an inaccessible ideal.”[51]

We have gotten used of saying: the *persecution* of the Jews in Russia. But the word is not fair. It was not a persecution, strictly speaking. It was a whole series of restrictions, of bullying. Vexing, admittedly, painful, even scandalous.

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However, the Pale of Settlement, over the years, was becoming more and more permeable.

According to the census of 1897, 315,000 Jews were already residing *outside* its boundaries, that is to say, in sixteen years, a nine-fold increase (and this represented 9% of the total Jewish population of Russia apart from the kingdom of Poland.[52] Let us compare: there were 115,000 Jews in France, and 200,000 in Great Britain[53]). Let us consider also that the census gave undervalued figures, in view of the fact that in many cities of Russia many craftsmen, many servants serving “authorised” Jews did not have an official existence, being shielded from registration.

Neither the top of the finance nor the educated elite were subject to the restrictions of the “Pale”, and both were established freely in the central provinces and in the capitals. It is well known that 14% of the Jewish population practised “liberal professions”[54]—not necessarily the intellectual type. One thing, however, is certain: in pre-revolutionary Russia, the Jews “occupied a prominent place in these intellectual occupations. The famous Pale of Settlement itself did not in any way prevent a large fraction of the Jews from penetrating more and more into the provinces of central Russia.”[55]

The so-called “artisanal” trades where the Jews were the most numerous were the dentists, the tailors, the nurses, the apothecaries, and a few others, trades of great utility everywhere, where they were always welcome. “In 1905, in Russia, more than 1,300,000 Jews were engaged in artisanal activities,”[56] which meant that they could live outside the “Pale”. And it must not be forgotten either that “nowhere in the laws it was stipulated, for example, that the craftsman who exercises a trade has no right to engage in commerce at the same time”; moreover, “the notion of ‘doing business’ is not defined by law”: for example, “deposit-selling” with commission, is it trade? Thus, in order to exercise any form of trade (even large-scale trading), to engage in the purchase of real estate, in the development of factories, one had to pass as “artisan” (or “dentist”!) For example, the “artisan” Neimark possessed a factory of sixty workers; typos thus opened their own printing press.[57] And there existed yet another way: several people regroup, and only one pays the fee of the first guild, the others pretending to be his “clerks”. Or even, to be “adopted” in a central province by retired Jewish soldiers (the “adopted” father received a pension in return[58]). In Riga, thousands of Jewish families lived on the timber trade until they were expelled due to false attestations.[59] At the dawn of the twentieth century, Jewish settlements were found in all Russian cities of some importance.

J. Teitel testified that “the construction of the Samara-Orenburg railway line resulted in the influx of a large number of Jews to Samara. The supervisors of this railway were Jews—Varchavsky, Gorvitch. For a long time they were also the owners. They occupied the control stations as well as a large number of subordinate jobs. They brought their families from the Pale of Settlement, and thus a very numerous Jewish colony was formed. They also took the export of wheat from the rich province of Samara to foreign countries. It should be noted that they were the first to export eggs from Russia to Western Europe. All these activities were carried out by so-called ‘artisans’.” And Teitel

enumerates three successive governors of the province of Samara as well as a chief of police (who, previously, in 1863, had been "excluded from the University of Saint Petersburg for having participated in student disorders" who "closed their eyes to these so-called artisans." Thus, around 1889, there lived in Samara "more than 300 Jewish families, without a residence permit"[60],—which means that in Samara, in addition to the official figures, there were in fact around 2,000 Jews.

Stories come to us from another end of Russia: at Viazma, "the three pharmacists, the six dentists, a number of doctors, notaries, many shopkeepers, almost all hairdressers, tailors, shoemakers were Jewish. All those who appeared as such were not dentists or tailors, many traded and no one prevented them from doing so. Of its 35,000 inhabitants, Viazma also had about two thousand Jews.[61]

In the region of the Army of the Don, where severe restrictions were imposed on Jews in 1880 and where they were forbidden to reside in Cossack villages and suburbs of the cities, there were nevertheless 25,000 keepers of inns and buffets, barbers, watchmakers, tailors. And any delivery of a quantity of goods, no matter the size, depended on them.

The system of restrictions on the rights of the Jews, with the whole range of corrections, reservations and amendments thereto, had been built up stratum after stratum over the years. The provisions aimed at the Jews were scattered in the various collections of laws promulgated at different times, badly harmonised among themselves, badly amalgamated with the common laws of the empire. The governors complained of it.[62] We must try to penetrate the mysteries of the innumerable derogations, special cases, exceptions of exceptions, which swarmed the legislation on the Jews, to understand what journey of the combatant this represented for the ordinary Jew, and what puzzle for the administration. Such complexity could only engender formalism, with its succession of cruelties; thus, when a head of a family domiciled in a central Russian province lost his right of residence (after his death or as a result of a change of profession), his whole family lost it with him. Families were thus expelled after the death of the head of the family (with the exception of single persons over 70 years of age).

However, complexity did not always play in disfavour of the Jews; it sometimes played to their advantage. Authors write that "it was the police commissioners and their deputies who were responsible for settling the endless wavering in the application of the restrictive measures," which resulted in the use of bribes and to the circumvention of the law[63]—always favourable to the Jews. There were also perfectly workable legal channels. "The contradictory nature of the innumerable laws and provisions on Jews offers the Senate a broad spectrum of interpretations of legislation… In the 90s, most of the provisions appealed by the Jews were annulled" by the Senate.[64] The highest dignitaries often closed their eyes to non-compliance with anti-Jewish restrictions—as G. Sliosberg testified, for example: "Ultimately, Jewish affairs depended on the head of the police department, Pyotr Nikolayevich Dumovo… The latter was always open to the complainants' arguments and I must say, to be honest, that if the application of any restrictive regulation were contrary to human charity, [Dournovo] would look into the matter and resolve it favourably."[65]

"Rather than the new laws, it was the provisions tending to a harder application of the old laws which were felt most painfully by the broad sections of the Jewish population."[66] The process, discreet but irreversible, by which the Jews gradually penetrated into the provinces of central Russia was sometimes stopped by the administration, and some duly orchestrated episodes went down in history.

This was the case in Moscow after the retirement of the all-powerful and almost irremovable Governor General V. A. Dolgorukov, who had regarded with great kindness the arrival of the Jews in the city and their economic activity. (The key to this attitude obviously resides in the person of the great banker Lazar Solomonovich Poliakov, "with whom Prince Dolgorukov had friendly ties and who, evil tongues affirmed, had opened to him in his bank an unlimited line of credit. That the prince had need of money, there was no doubt about it," for he had yielded all his fortune to his son-in-law, while he himself "loved to live it up, and also had great spendings." Consequently, L. Poliakov "was covered year after year with honours and distinctions." Thanks to this, the Jews of Moscow felt a firm ground beneath their feet: "Every Jew could receive the right of residence in the capital" without actually putting himself "at the service of one of his coreligionists, a merchant of the first Guild."[67])

G. Sliosberg informs us that “Dolgorukov was accused of yielding too much to the influence of Poliakov.” And he explains: Poliakov was the owner of the Moscow mortgage lending, so neither in the province of Moscow nor in any neighbouring province could any other mortgage bank operate (i.e. granting advances on property mortgage-funds). Now, “there was no nobleman possessing land that did not hypothecate his possessions.” (Such was the defeat of the Russian nobility at the end of the nineteenth century: and, after that, of what use could it still be for Russia?…) These noblemen found themselves “in a certain dependence on banks”; to obtain large loans, all sought the favours of Lazar Poliakov.[68]

Under the magistracy of Dolgorukov, around the 90s, “there were many recruitments of Jews in the body of merchants of the first guild. This was explained by the reluctance of Muscovite merchants of Christian denomination to pay the high entrance fees of this first guild. Before the arrival of the Jews, the Muscovite industry worked only for the eastern part of the country, for Siberia, and its goods did not run westward. It was the Jewish merchants and industrialists who provided the link between Moscow and the markets of the western part of the country. (Teitel confirms that the Jews of Moscow were considered the richest and most influential in Russia.) Threatened by the competition, German merchants became indignant and accused Dolgorukov of favouritism towards the Jews.[69]

But the situation changed dramatically in 1891. The new Governor-General of Moscow, the Grand Duke Sergey Alexandrovich[*], an almighty man due to his position and dependent on no one due to his fortune, took the decision to expel all the Jewish craftsmen from Moscow, without any preliminary inquiry as to who was truly a craftsman and who pretended to be a craftsman. Whole neighbourhoods—Zariadie, Marina Roscha—were emptied of their inhabitants. It is estimated that as many as 20,000 Jews were expelled. They were allowed a maximum of six months to liquidate their property and organise their departure, and those who declared that they did not have the means to ensure their displacement were shipped in prison vans. (At the height of the expulsions and to control how they were executed, an American government commission—Colonel Weber, Dr. Kamster—went to Russia. The astonishing thing is that Sliosberg brought them to Moscow, where they investigated what was happening, how measures were applied to stem the “influx of Jews”, where they even visited the Butyrka prison incognito, where they were offered a few pairs of handcuffs, where they were given the photographs of people who had been sent in the vans… and the Russian police did not notice anything! (These were the “Krylov mores”[*]!) They visited again, for many more weeks, other Russian cities. The report of this commission was published in 1892 in the documents of the American Congress… to the greatest shame of Russia and to the liveliest relief of Jewish immigration to the United States.[70] It is because of this harassment that Jewish financial circles, Baron de Rothschild in the lead, refused in 1892 to support Russian borrowing abroad.[71] There had already been attempts in Europe in 1891 to stop the expulsion of the Jews from Moscow. The American-Jewish banker Seligman, for example, went to the Vatican to ask the Pope to intercede with Alexander III and exhort him to more moderation.[72] In 1891, “a part of the expelled Jews settled without permission in the suburbs of Moscow.” But in the fall of 1892, following the measures taken, an order was made to “expel from Moscow former soldiers of the retired contingent and members of their families not registered in the communities.”[73] (It should be noted that in 1893 the large Russian commercial and industrial enterprises intervened to soften these measures.) Then, from 1899, there was almost no new registration of Jews in the first guild of Moscow merchants.[74]

In 1893 a new aggravation of the fate of the Jews arose: the Senate first noticed the existence of a bulletin issued by the Ministry of the Interior, in force since 1880 (the “Charter of Jewish Freedom”) which allowed Jews who had already established themselves outside the Pale of Settlement, illegally however, to remain where they were. This bulletin was repealed (except in Courland and Livonia where it was retained). The number of families who had settled over the last twelve years amounted to 70,000! Fortunately, thanks to Dournovo, “life-saving articles were enacted which, in the end, prevented the immense catastrophe that threatened.”[75]

In 1893, “certain categories of Jews” were expelled in turn from Yalta, for the summer residence of the Imperial family was not far away, and they were forbidden any new settlement there: “The always increasing influx in the number of Jews in the city of Yalta, the appetite for real estate, threatens this holiday resort of becoming, purely and simply, a Jewish city.”[76] (here could have been at play, after all the terrorist attacks in Russia, the security of the Imperial family in its residence in Livadia. Alexander III had every reason to believe—he was only one year away from his death—that he was cordially hated by the Jews. It is not possible to exclude as motive the idea of avenging the

persecution of the Jews, as can be deduced by the choice of terrorist targets—Sipiagin, Plehve, Grand Duke Serge.) This did not prevent many Jews from remaining in the Yalta region—judging from what the inhabitants of Alushta wrote in 1909, complaining that the Jews, buyers of vineyards and orchards, "exploit 'to foster their development' the work of the local population," taking advantage of the precarious situation of said population and granting loans "at exorbitant rates" which ruin the Tatars, inhabitants of the site.[77]

But there was also another thing in the favour of the tireless struggle against smuggling, the right of residence of the Jews in the Western frontier zone was limited. There was in fact no further expulsion—with the exception of individuals caught in the act of smuggling. (According to memorialists, this smuggling, which consisted in passing the frontier to revolutionaries and their printed works, continued until the First World War.) In 1903–1904, a debate ensued: the Senate provides that the Provisional Regulations of 1882 shall not apply to the frontier zone and that accordingly Jews residing in that area may "freely settle in the rural areas. The Council of the Province of Bessarabia then issued a protest, informing the Senate that 'the entire Jewish population'" in the border area, including those where Jews had illegally settled there, was now seeking to gain access to the countryside where there were already 'more Jews than needed'," and that the border area "now risked becoming for the Jews the 'Promised Area'." The protest passed before the Council of State, which, taking into account the particular case of rural localities, squarely abolished the special regime of the border area, bringing it back to the general regime of the Pale of Settlement.[78]

This softening, however, did not find significant echo in the press or in society. No more than the lifting, in 1887, of the prohibition of the Jews to hire Christian servants. Nor did the 1891 Act introducing into the Penal Code a new article on "responsibility in the event of an open attack on part of the population by another", an article that the circumstances of life in Russia had never required, but which had been sorely lacking during the pogroms of 1881. For greater caution it was now introduced.

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And again, let us repeat: the limitations on the rights of the Jews never assumed a racial character in Russia. They applied neither to the Karaites[*], nor to the Jews of the mountains, nor to the Jews of Central Asia, who, scattered and merged with the local population, had always freely chosen their type of activity.

The most diverse authors explain to us, each one more than the other, that the root causes of the restrictions suffered by Jews in Russia are of an economic nature. The Englishman J. Parks, the great defender of these restrictions, nevertheless expresses this reservation: "Before the war [of 14–18], some Jews had concentrated considerable wealth in their hands… This had led to fear that abolishing these limitations would allow the Jews to become masters of the country."[79] Professor V. Leontovitch, a perfectly consistent liberal, notes: "Until recently, we seemed to be unaware that the restrictive measures imposed on Jews came much more from anti-capitalist tendencies than from racial discrimination. The concept of race was of no interest to Russia in those years, except for specialists in ethnology… It is the fear of the strengthening of the capitalist elements, which could aggravate the exploitation of peasants and of all the workers, which was decisive. Many sources prove this."[80] Let us not forget that the Russian peasantry had just undergone the shock of a sudden mutation: from the transition of feudal relations to market relations, a passage to which it was not at all prepared and which would throw it into an economic maelstrom sometimes more pitiless than serfdom itself.

V. Choulguine writes in this regard as follows: "The limitation of the rights of the Jews in Russia was underpinned by a 'humanistic thought'… It was assumed that the Russian people, taken globally (or at least some of their social strata) was, in a way, immature, effeminate…, that it allowed itself to be easily exploited…, that for this reason it had to be protected by state measures against foreign elements stronger than itself. Northern Russia began to look at the Jews with the eyes of Southern Russia. The Little-Russians had always seen the Jews, whom they knew well in the days of their coexistence with Poland, under the guise of the 'pawnbrokers' who suck the blood of the unfortunate Russian."[81] The restrictions were designed by the government to combat the massive economic pressure that put the foundations of the state at risk. Parks also detects in this vision of things a part of truth; he observes "the disastrous effect which the faculty of exploiting one's neighbour may have," and "the excessive role of innkeepers and usurers in the rural areas of

Eastern Europe", even if he perceives the reasons for such a state of affairs "in the peasant's nature more than in the Jews themselves." In his opinion, the vodka trade, as the "main activity of the Jews" in Eastern Europe, gave rise to hatred, and among the peasants even more than among the others. It was he who fed more than one pogrom, leaving a deep and broad scar in the consciousness of the Ukrainian and Belarusian peoples, as well as in the memory of the Jewish people.[82]

We read in many authors that the Jewish innkeepers lived very hard, without a penny, that they were almost reduced to begging. But was the alcohol market as narrow as that? Many people grew fat with the intemperance of the Russian people—and the landowners of Western Russia, and the distillers, and the drinking-house keepers… and the government! The amount of revenue can be estimated from the time it was entered as national revenue. After the introduction of a state monopoly on spirits in Russia in 1896, with the abolition of all private debits and the sale of beverages by excise duty, the Treasury collected 285 million rubles in the following year—to report to the 98 millions of the direct tax levied on the population. This confirms that not only was the manufacture of spirits "a major source of indirect contributions", but also that the spirits industry's revenues, which until 1896 only paid "4 kopecks of excise duty per degree of alcohol produced," were much higher than the direct revenues of the empire.[83]

But what was at that time the Jewish participation in this sector? In 1886, during the works of the Pahlen Commission, statistics were published on the subject. According to these figures, Jews held 27% (the decimals do not appear here: the numbers have been rounded up everywhere) of all distilleries in European Russia, 53% in the Pale of Settlement (notably 83% in the province of Podolsk, 76% in that of Grodno, 72% in that of Kherson). They held 41% of breweries in European Russia, 71% in the Pale of Settlement (94% in the province of Minsk, 91% in the province of Vilnius, 85% in the province of Grodno). The proportion of manufacturing and sales points in Jewish commerce is 29% in European Russia, 61% in the Pale of Settlement (95% in the province of Grodno, 93% in Mogilev, 91% in the province of Minsk).[84]

It is understandable that the reform which established the state monopoly on spirits was "greeted with horror… by the Jews of the Pale of Settlement."[85]

It is incontestable: the establishment of a State monopoly on spirits dealt a very severe blow to the economic activity of the Jews of Russia. And until the First World War (it ended at that time), this monopoly remained the favourite target of general indignation—whereas it merely instituted a rigorous control of the amount of alcohol produced in the country, and its quality. Forgetting that it reached the Christian tenants in the same way (see the statistics above), it is always presented as an anti-Jewish measure: "The introduction at the end of the 90s of the sale of alcohol by the State in the Pale of Settlement has deprived more than 100,000 Jews of their livelihood"; "Power meant… forcing the Jews to leave the rural areas," and since then "this trade has lost for the Jews the importance it once had."[86]

It was indeed the moment—from the end of the nineteenth century—when Jewish emigration from Russia grew remarkably. Is there a link between this emigration and the establishment of the state monopoly on the sale of spirits? That is difficult to say, but the figure of 100,000 quoted above suggests so. The fact is that Jewish emigration (in America) remained low until 1886–1887; it experienced a brief surge in 1891–1892, but it was only after 1897 that it became massive and continuous.[87]

The "Provisional Regulations" of 1882 had not prevented further infiltration of Jewish spirits into the countryside. Just as, in the 70s, they had found a loophole against the prohibition of selling elsewhere than home by inventing "street" commerce. It had been devised to circumvent the law of May 3rd, 1882 (which also forbade the commerce of vodka by contract issued with a Jew), leasing "on the sly": to set up an inn there, one rented a land by oral and not written contract, in order for the taxes to be covered by the owner, and the proceeds from the sale of drinks went to the Jew.[88] It was through this and other means that the implantation of the Jews in the countryside could continue after the categorical prohibition of 1882. As Sliosberg writes, it was from 1889 that began the "wave of expulsions" of the Jews outside the villages of the Pale of Settlement, which resulted in "a pitiless competition, generating a terrible evil: denunciation" (in other words, Jews began to denounce those among them who lived illegally). But here are the figures

put forward by P. N. Miliukov: if in 1881 there were 580,000 Jews living in villages, there were 711,000 Jews in 1897, which means that the rate of new arrivals and births far outweighed those of evictions and deaths. In 1899, a new Committee for Jewish Affairs, the eleventh of the name, with Baron Lexhull von Hildebrandt at its head, was set up to revise the Provisional Regulations. This Committee, wrote Miliukov, rejected the proposal to expel from the countryside the Jews who illegally established themselves there, and softened the law of 1882.[89]

While "recognising that the peasantry, which is not very developed, has no entrepreneurial spirit and no means of development, must be protected from any contact with Jews," the Committee insisted that "the landowners have no need for the tutelage of the government; the limitation of the right of the owners to manage their property as they see fit depreciates said property and compels the proprietors to employ, in concert with the Jews, all sorts of expedients to circumvent the law"; the lifting of prohibitions on Jews will enable landowners to derive greater benefit from their assets.[90] But the proprietors no longer had the prestige, which might have given weight to this argument in the eyes of the administration.

It was in 1903–1904 that the revision of the Regulations of 1882 was seriously undertaken. Reports came from the provinces (notably from Sviatopolk Mirsky, who was Governor-General and soon to become the Liberal Minister of the Interior), saying that the Regulations had not proved their worth, that it was imperative that the Jews should leave towns and villages where their concentration was too high, and that, thanks to the establishment of a State monopoly on beverages, the threat of Jewish exploitation of the rural population was removed. These proposals were approved by Sipyagin, the minister (who was soon to be shot down by a terrorist), and, in 1908, endorsed by Plehve (soon assassinated in his turn). A list of a hundred and one villages had been drawn up and published, to which fifty-seven others would soon be added, in which the Jews acquired the right to settle and purchase real estate, and to lease it. (In the *Jewish Encyclopædia* dating before the revolution, we read the names of these localities, some of which, already quite important, were to spread rapidly: Yuzovka, Lozovaya, Ienakievo, Krivoy Rog, Sinelnikovo, Slavgorod, Kakhovka, Zhmerynka, Chepetovka, Zdolbuniv, Novye Senjary, among others.) Outside this list and Jewish agricultural settlements, Jews did not get the right to acquire land. However, the Regulations were soon abrogated for certain categories: graduates of higher studies, pharmacists, artisans and former retired soldiers. These people were given the right to reside in the countryside, to engage in commerce and various other trades.[91]

While the sale of spirits and the various kinds of farming—including that of the land—were the main sources of income for Jews, there were others, including notably the ownership of land. Among the Jews, "the aspiration to possess the land was expressed by the acquisition of large areas capable of harbouring several types of activities rather than by the use of small parcels which are to be developed by the owner himself."[92] When the land, which gives life to the peasant, reaches a higher price than that of a purely agricultural property, it was not uncommon for a Jewish entrepreneur to acquire it.

As we have seen, the direct leasing and purchasing of the land by the Jews was not prohibited until 1881, and the purchasers were not deprived of their rights by the new prohibitions. This is how, for example, Trotsky's father, David Bronstein, possessed in the province of Kherson, not far from Elizabethgrad, and held in his possession until the revolution an important business (an "economy" as it was called in the South). He also owned, later on, the "Nadejda" mine in the suburb of Krivoi Rog.[93] On the basis of what he had observed in the exploitation of his father—and, as he heard it, "in all farms it is the same", Trotsky relates that the seasonal workers, who had come by foot from the central provinces to be hired, were very malnourished: never meat nor bacon, oil but very little, vegetables and oatmeal, that's all, and this, during the hard summer work, from dawn to twilight, and even, "one summer, an epidemic of hemeralopia[*] was declared among the workers."[94] For my part, I will argue that in an "economy" of the same type, in Kuban, with my grandfather Scherbak (himself a member of a family of agricultural workers), the day workers were served, during the harvest, meat three times a day.

But a new prohibition fell in 1903: "A provision of the Council of Ministers deprived all Jews of the right to acquire immovable property throughout the empire, outside urban areas, that is to say in rural areas."[95] This limited to a certain extent the industrial activity of the Jews, but, as the *Jewish Encyclopædia* points out, by no means their agricultural activity; in any case, "to use the right to acquire land, the Jews would undoubtedly have delegated fewer

cultivators than landlords and tenants. It seems doubtful whether a population as urban as the Jewish population was able to supply a large number of farmers."[96]

In the early years of the twentieth century, the picture was as follows: "About two million hectares which are now owned or leased by Jews in the empire and the Kingdom of Poland… only 113,000… are home to Jewish agricultural settlements."[97]

Although the Provisional Regulations of 1882 prohibited the Jews from buying or leasing out of towns and villages, devious means were also found there, notably for the acquisition of land intended for the sugar industry.

Thus the Jews who possessed large areas of land were opposed to the agrarian reform of Stolypin, which granted land to the peasants on a personal basis. (They were not the only ones: one is astonished at the hostility with which this reform was received by the *press* of those years, and not only by that of the extreme right, but by the perfectly liberal press, not to mention the revolutionary press.) The *Jewish Encyclopædia* argues: "The agrarian reforms that planned to cede land exclusively to those who cultivated it would have harmed the interests of a part of the Jewish population, that which worked in the large farms of Jewish owners."[98] It was not until the Revolution passed that a Jewish author took a look back and, already boiling with proletarian indignation, wrote: "The Jewish landowners possessed under the tsarist regime more than two million hectares of land (mainly around Ukrainian sugar factories, as well as large estates in Crimea and Belarus)", and, moreover, "they owned more than two million hectares of the best land, black earth." Thus, Baron Ginzburg possessed in the district of Dzhankoy 87,000 hectares; the industrialist Brodsky owned tens of thousands of hectares for his sugar mills, and others owned similar estates, so that in total the Jewish capitalists combined 872,000 hectares of arable land.[99]

After the land ownership came the *trade of wheat* and *cereal products*. (Let us remember that the export of grain "was chiefly carried out by Jews."[100] "Of the total Jewish population of the USSR, not less than 18%, before the revolution (i.e. more than one million people!] were engaged in the trade of wheat, bosses and members of their families alike, which caused a real animosity of the peasants towards the Jewish population" (because the big buyers did everything to lower the price of the wheat in order to resell it for more profit.[101]) In the western provinces and in Ukraine, the Jews bought in bulk other agricultural commodities. (Moreover, how can we not point out that in places like Klintsy, Zlynka, Starodub, Ielenovka, Novozybkov, the old believers, workers and industrious, never let trade go by other hands?) Biekerman believes that the prohibition of Jewish merchants to operate throughout the territory of Russia fostered apathy, immobility, domination by the kulaks. However, "If Russia's trade in wheat has become an integral part of world trade, Russia owes it to the Jews." As we have already seen, "as early as 1878, 60% of wheat exports from the port of Odessa were by Jews. They were the first to develop the wheat trade at Nikolayev," Kherson, Rostov-on-Don, as well as in the provinces of Orel, Kursk, and Chernigov. They were "well represented in the wheat trade in Saint Petersburg." And in the North-West region, out of 1,000 traders of cereal products there were 930 Jews."[102]

However, most of our sources do not shed light on how these Jewish merchants behaved with their trading partners. In fact, they were often very hard and practised procedures that today we would consider illicit; they could, for example, agree among themselves and refuse to buy the crop in order to bring down prices. It is understandable that in the 90s farmers' cooperatives (under the leadership of Count Heiden and Bekhteyev) were set up in the southern provinces for the first time in Russia and a step ahead of Europe. Their mission was to thwart these massive, monopolistic purchases of peasant wheat.

Let us recall another form of commerce in the hands of the Jews: the "export of wood came second after the wheat."[103] From 1813 to 1913, these exports were multiplied by 140! And the Communist Larinus fulminated: "The Jewish proprietors possessed… large forested areas, and they leased a part of it, even in the provinces where the Jews were not normally allowed to reside."[104] The *Jewish Encyclopædia* confirms it: "The Jews acquired the land, especially in the central provinces, chiefly to exploit the forest wealth."[105] However, as they did not have the right to install sawmills in some places, the wood left abroad in the raw state, for a dead loss for the country. (There existed other prohibitions: access for export of timber in the ports of Riga, Revel, Petersburg; the installation of warehouses along the railways).[106]

Such is the picture. Everything is there. And the tireless dynamism of Jewish commerce, which drives entire states. And the prohibitions of a timorous, sclerotic bureaucracy that only hinders progress. And the ever-increasing irritation these prohibitions provoke among the Jews. And the sale of the Russian forest, exported abroad in its raw state, as a raw material. And the small farmer, the small operator, who, caught in a merciless vise, has neither the relationships nor the skills to invent other forms of trade. And let us not forget the Ministry of Finance, which pours its subsidies on industry and railways and abandons agriculture, whereas the tax burden is carried by the class of the farmers, not the merchants. One wonders: under the conditions of the new economic dynamics that came to replenish the Treasury and was largely due to the Jews, was there anyone to worry about the harm done to the common people, the shock suffered by it, from the break in its way of life, in its very being?

For half a century, Russia has been accused—from the inside as well as from the outside—of having enslaved the Jews economically and having forced them to misery. It was necessary that the years passed, that this abominable Russia disappear from the surface of the earth, it will be necessary to cross the revolutionary turmoil for a Jewish author of the 30s to look at the past, over the bloody wall of the Revolution, and acknowledge: "The tsarist government has not pursued a policy of total eviction of Jews from economic life. Apart from the well-known limitations… in the countryside…, on the whole, the tsarist government tolerated the economic activity of the Jews." The tensions of the national struggle, "the Jews did not feel them in their economic activity. The dominant nation did not want to take the side of a particular ethnic group, it was only trying to play the role of arbiter or mediator."[107]

Besides, it happened that the government was intruding into the economy on national grounds. It then took measures which, more often than not, were doomed to failure. Thus, "in 1890, a bulletin was diffused under which the Jews lost the right to be directors of corporations that intended to purchase or lease lands."[108] But it was the childhood of the art of circumventing this law: remaining anonymous. This kind of prohibition in no way impeded the activity of Jewish entrepreneurs. "The role of Jews was especially important in foreign trade where their hegemony was assured and their geographical location (near borders) and by their contacts abroad, and by their commercial intermediaries skills."[109]

As regards to the sugar industry, more than a third of the factories were Jewish at the end of the century.[110] We have seen in previous chapters how the industry had developed under the leadership of Israel Brodsky and his sons Lazar and Leon ("at the beginning of the twentieth century, they controlled directly or indirectly seventeen sugar mills"[111]). Galperine Moses, "in the early twentieth century had eight factories and three refineries… He also owned 50,000 hectares of sugar beet cropland."[112]

"Hundreds of thousands of Jewish families lived off the sugar industry, acting as intermediaries, sellers, and so on." When competition appeared, as the price of sugar began to fall, a syndicate of sugar producers in Kiev called for control of production and sale, in order for prices not to fall.[113] The Brodsky Brothers were the founders of the Refiners' Union in 1903.[114]

In addition to the grain trade, the wood trade and the sugar industry where they occupied a predominant position, other areas must be cited in which the Jews largely contributed to development: flour milling, fur trade, spinning mills, confection, the tobacco industry, the brewery.[115] In 1835 they were also present at the major fairs in Nizhny Novgorod.[116] In Transbaikalia they launched a livestock trade which took off in the 90s, and the same happened in Siberia for the production of coal—Andjero-Soudji hard coal—and the extraction of gold, where they played a major role. After 1892, the Ginzburg "devoted themselves almost exclusively to the extraction of gold." The most prosperous enterprise was the Lena Gold Mining Company, which "was controlled in fact (from 1896 until its death in 1909) by Baron Horace Ginzburg, son of Evzel Ginzburg, founder of the Bank of the same name and president of its branch in Saint Petersburg. (The son of Horace, David, also a baron, remained at the head of the Jewish community of Saint Petersburg until his death in 1910. His sons Alexander and Alfred sat on the board of Lena, the gold mining company. Another son, Vladimir, married the daughter of the owner of the Kiev sugar factory, L. I. Brodsky.) Horace Ginzburg was also "the founder of… the gold extraction companies from Transbaikalia, Miias, Berezovka, Altai and a few others."[117] In 1912, a huge scandal about the Lena mines broke out and caused quite a stir throughout the country: the

operating conditions were abominable, the workers had been misled… Appropriately, the tsarist government was accused of everything and demonised. No one, in the raging liberal press mentioned the main shareholders, notably the Ginzburg sons.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Jews represented 35% of the merchant class in Russia.[118] Choulguine gives us what he observed in the southwest region: "Where have they gone, Russian traders, where is the Russian third estate? … In time, we had a strong Russian *bourgeoisie*… Where have they gone?" "They were ousted by the Jews, lowered into the social ladder, to the state of *moujiks*."[119] The Russians in the southwest region have chosen their own fate: it is clear. And at the beginning of the century, the eminent politician V. I. Gourko[*] observed: "The place of the Russian merchant is more and more frequently taken by a Jew."[120]

The Jews also gained influence and authority in the booming sector of the cooperative system. More than half of the Mutual Credit and Savings and Loan Companies were in the Pale of Settlement (86% of their members in 1911 were Jewish).[121]

We have already spoken of the construction and operation of the Russian railways by the Poliakov brothers, Bliokh and Varshavsky. With the exception of the very first lines (the Tsarskoselskaya line and the Nikolaevskaya line), almost all the railways that were later built were made by concessionary companies in which the Jews occupied the command posts; "But, as of the 1890s, the state was the first builder." On the other hand, it is under the leadership of David Margoline that was created in 1883 the great shipping company "on the Dnieper and its tributaries", the main shareholders of which were Jews. In 1911, the company owned a fleet of 78 vessels and accounted for 71% of the traffic on the Dnieper.[122] Other companies operating on the Western Dvina, the Niemen, joined the Mariinsky Canal and the Volga.

There were also about ten oil companies belonging to Jews from Baku. "The biggest were the oil company belonging to the brothers S. and M. Poliak and to Rothschild, and the joint-stock company of the Caspian-Black Sea, behind which was also found the name of Rothschild." These companies were not allowed to extract oil; they specialised in refining and exporting.[123]

But it was in finance that the economic activity of the Jews was the most brilliant. "Credit is an area where Jews have long felt at home. They have created new ways and have perfected the old. They played a leading role in the hands of a few large capitalists and in the organisation of commercial investment banks. The Jews brought out of their ranks not only the banking aristocracy but also the mass of employees."[124] The bank of Evzel Ginzburg, founded in 1859 in Saint Petersburg, grew and strengthened thanks to its links with the Mendelssohn in Berlin, the Warburg in Hamburg, the Rothschild in Paris and Vienna. But when the financial crisis of 1892 broke out, and "because of the government's refusal to support its bank with loans," as had happened twice before, E. Ginzburg withdrew from business.[125] By the 70s, there existed a network of banks founded by the three Poliakov brothers, Jacob, Samuel and Lazar. These are the Azov-Don Commercial Bank (to be later managed by B. Kaminka), the Mortgage Lending of Moscow, the Don Land Bank, the Poliakov Bank, the International Bank and "a few other houses which will later form the Unified Bank."— The Bank of Siberia had A. Soloveitchik at its head, the Commercial Bank of Warsaw was directed by I. Bliokh. In several other large establishments, Jews occupied important posts (Zak, Outine, Khesine, A. Dobryi, Vavelberg, Landau, Epstein, Krongold). "In two large banks only, the Commercial Bank of Moscow and that of the Volga-Kama, there were no Jews either in the leadership or among the staff."[126] The Poliakov brothers all had the rank of secret counsellor and, as we have said, all three were granted hereditary nobility.[127]

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Thus, at the dawn of the twentieth century, the Pale of Settlement had already completely emptied itself of its substance. It had not prevented the Jews from occupying solid positions in the vital sectors of the country's life, from economy and finance to the intellectual sphere. The "Pale" no longer had any practical utility; its economic and political purpose was outdated. It had only filled the Jews with anti-government bitterness and resentment; it had thrown oil on

the fire of social discontent and had struck the Russian government with the seal of infamy in the eyes of the West.

But let us be clear: this Russian Empire, with the slowness and sclerosis of its bureaucracy, the mentality of its leaders, where and in what way did it fall behind all through the nineteenth century and decades before the revolution? It had been unable to settle a dozen major problems affecting the life of the country. It had not been able to organise local civil self-government, install zemstvos in rural districts, carry out agrarian reform, remedy the state of pernicious state of humiliation of the Church, or communicate with civil society and make its action understood. It had managed neither the boom of mass education nor the development of Ukrainian culture. To this list let us add another point where the delay proved catastrophic: the revision of the real conditions of the Pale of Settlement, the awareness of their influence on all positionings of the State. The Russian authorities have had a hundred years and more to solve the problems of the Jewish population, and they have not been able to do so, neither in the sense of an open assimilation nor by allowing the Jews to remain in voluntary isolation, that which was already theirs a century before.

Meanwhile, during the decades from the 70s to the beginning of the twentieth century, Russian Judaism experienced a rapid development, an undeniable blossoming of its elite, which already felt cramped, not only within the limits of the Pale of Settlement, but in those of the empire.

When analysing the concrete aspects of the inequality in Jewish rights in Russia, the Pale of Settlement and the *numerus clausus*, we must not lose sight of this general picture. For if American Judaism grew in importance, the Jews of Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century still constituted nearly half of the Jewish population of the planet.[128] This is to be remembered as an important fact in the history of Judaism. And it is still Mr. Biekerman who, looking behind him over the ditch of the revolution, wrote in 1924: “Tsarist Russia was home to more than half the Jewish people. It is natural, consequently, that the Jewish history of the generations that are closest to us is mainly the history of the Jews of Russia.” And even though in the nineteenth century “the Jews of the West had been richer, more influential, and more cultured than we were, the vitality of Judaism was nevertheless in Russia. And this vitality grew stronger and stronger at the same time as the Russian Empire flourished… It was only when provinces populated by Jews were united to Russia that this rebirth began. The Jewish population grew rapidly in number, to such an extent that it was able to leave a very numerous colony overseas; it had amassed and possessed important capital in its hands; a middle class had grown and acquired authority; the standard of living of the lower strata had also grown incessantly. By a variety of efforts, the Jews of Russia had been able to overcome the physical and moral abjection which they had brought from Poland; European culture and education reached Jewish circles… and we went so far in this direction, we have amassed such spiritual wealth that we have been able to afford the luxury of having a literature in three languages…” All this culture, all this wealth, it is in Russia that the Jews of Eastern Europe have received them. Russian Judaism, “by its numbers and by the greenness of the energies it contained, proved to be the backbone of all the Jewish people.”[129]

A more recent author, our contemporary, confirms in 1989 the correctness of this painting brushed by his elder, witness of the time. He wrote: “The public life of the Jews of Russia had reached, at the turn of the two centuries, a degree of maturity and amplitude which many small peoples in Europe might have envied.”[130]

If there is a reproach that cannot be made to the “prison of the people”, it is to have denationalised the people, be it the Jews or others.

Certain Jewish authors, it is true, deplore the fact that in the 80s “the cultivated Jews of the capital had hardly been involved in the defence of Jewish interests”, that only Baron Ginzburg and a few other wealthy Jews with good relations.[131] “The Jews of Petersburg (30,000 to 40,000 in 1900) lived unconnected with one another, and the Jewish intelligentsia, in its majority, remained aloof, indifferent to the needs and interests of the community as a whole.”[132] Yet it was also the time when “the holy spirit of the Renaissance… hovered over the Pale of Settlement and awakened in the younger generations the forces that had been dormant for many centuries among the Jewish people… It was a veritable spiritual revolution.” Among Jewish girls, “the thirst for instruction showed literarily religious signs.” And already, even in Saint Petersburg, “a large number of Jewish students frequented higher education institutions.” At the beginning of the twentieth century, “a great part of the Jewish intelligentsia… felt… that it was its duty to return to its people.”[133]

Thanks to this spiritual awakening at the end of the nineteenth century, very diverse and sometimes contradictory

trends emerged in Russian Judaism. Some of them will be called upon to determine to a large extent the destinies of our land throughout the twentieth century.

At the time, the Jews of Russia envisaged at least six possible orientations, however incompatible with each other. Namely:

- the safeguard of their religious identity by isolation, as had been practised for centuries (but this path became more and more unpopular);
- assimilation;
- the struggle for national and cultural autonomy, the active presence of Judaism in Russia as a distinct element;
- emigration;
- adherence to Zionism;
- adherence to the revolution.

Indeed, the proponents of these different tendencies were often united in the work of acculturation of the Jewish masses in three languages—Hebrew, Yiddish and Russian—and in welfare works—in the spirit of the theory of "small gestures" in vogue in Russia in the 80s.

Mutual aid was embodied in Jewish associations, some of which, after the revolution, were able to continue their action in emigration. This was the case with the Society for the Dissemination of Education among the Jews of Russia, which had been founded in 1863. By the mid-90s, this Society was already opening its own schools, with, besides an education in Russian, courses in Hebrew. It convened Pan-Russian conferences on the theme of Jewish popular education.[134]

In 1891 began the works of a Commission of Jewish History and Ethnography, which in 1908 became the Society of Jewish History and Ethnography. It coordinated the study of Jewish history through Russia and the collection of archives.[135]

In 1880, the "King of the Railways", Samuel Poliakov, founded the Society of Craft and Agricultural Labour among the Jews (SCAL). The latter collected a good deal of money and "devoted the bulk of its efforts, at the beginning of its efforts, to the transfer of Jewish artisans outside the Pale of Settlement to the central provinces."[136] We have seen that after the initial authorisation given (in 1865) to this transfer the craftsmen moved only in small numbers. What happened after the pogroms of 1881–1882? We could think: now, they will certainly leave, they have the help the SCAL, plus a subsidy from the government for the displacement, they will not remain there, moping around, confined in this damned Pale where one was condemned to a wretched death, but no: after more than ten years of efforts on the part of the SCAL, only 170 artisans moved! The SCAL decided then to help artisans inside the Pale by purchasing tools, setting up workshops and then creating professional schools.[137]

Emigration was taken over by the Society for Colonisation by the Jews (SCJ), whose creation followed the opposite course: first abroad, then in Russia. It was founded in London in 1891 by Baron Moritz von Hirsch, who for this purpose made a donation of 2,000,000 pounds sterling. His idea was the following: to substitute the chaotic emigration of the Jews of Eastern Europe with a well-ordered colonisation, oriented towards the countries requiring cultivators, and thus to bring back at least part of the Jews to the cultivation of the land, to free them from this "anomaly… which arouses the animosity of the European peoples."[138] "To seek for the Jews who leave Russia 'a new homeland and try to divert them from their usual activity, trade, make them farmers and thereby contribute to the work of rebirth of the Jewish people'."[139] This new homeland, it would be Argentina. (Another objective was to divert the wave of Jewish immigration away from the shores of the United States where, owing to the influx of immigrants, the wage decline induced by their competition, there rose the spectre of anti-Semitism.) As it was proposed to populate this land with Jews of Russia, an office of the Society for Colonisation opened in Saint Petersburg in 1892. It "set up 450 information offices and 20 neighbourhood committees. They received the candidates for emigration to help them obtain their exit papers from the territory, they negotiated with the maritime messengers, they procured travellers with tickets at reduced prices, they published brochures" on countries likely to welcome new settlers.[140] (Sliosberg denounces in

passing the fact that “no person not holding a double title as a banker or a millionaire had access to their direction.”[141])

Since the end of the nineteenth century, the emigration of Jews from Russia had been growing steadily for various reasons, some of which have already been mentioned here. One of the most serious of these was the compulsory conscription: if so many young men (it is Denikin who writes it) chose to mutilate themselves, was it not better to emigrate? Especially when we know that conscription simply did not exist in the United States! (The Jewish authors are silent on this motif, and the *Jewish Encyclopædia* itself, in the article “The Emigration of the Jews of Russia”, does not say a single word of it.[142] It is true that this reason does not explain on its own the emigration boom in the 90s.) Another reason, also of significance: the Provisional Regulations of 1882. The third major shock was the expulsion of Jewish craftsmen from Moscow in 1891. And also this other, very violent: the establishment of the state monopoly on spirits in Russia in 1896, which deprived all the tenants of drinking places of their income and reduced the revenues of the distillers. (Sliosberg: those who had been expelled from the villages or provinces of the interior were volunteers for emigration.) G. Aronson notes that in the 80s an average of 15,000 Jews emigrated each year, and that they were up to 30,000 in the 90s.[143]

The attitude of the Russian authorities in the face of this growing emigration—a genuine boon to the State—was benevolent. The Russian Government readily agreed to the establishment of the SCJ in Saint Petersburg, and the measures that it adopted to promote emigration; it did not interfere in any of its actions, authorising the age group of the conscripts to emigrate with their families; it issued free exit visas and granted special rates on trains—on one condition, however: once gone, the emigrants were never to return to Russia again.[144]

To cross the ocean, it was necessary at the time to pass through England, which meant that in the English port cities there was provisionally a crowd of Jewish emigrants—some of whom remained and settled in Great Britain while others returned there after an attempt to settle in the United States. As early as 1890, English public opinion rebelled against the policy of the Russian government: “The Jewish question is constantly occupying the columns of the British newspapers… In America, too, the question of the situation of Jews in Russia remains day after day of actuality.”[145] Having assessed the proportions that this migratory flow was likely to take, Great Britain soon closed its doors.[146]

The immigration to Argentina had also stopped in 1894. The *Jewish Encyclopædia* described this as a “brooding crisis… in the Argentine question.”[147] Sliosberg spoke of the “disenchantment of immigrants in Argentina” (the disgruntled rebelled and sent collective petitions to the administration of Baron Hirsch). The Duma debates highlighted a situation similar to the experience in New Russia: “Immigration to Argentina provides examples that confirm that in many cases people have received land on very advantageous terms, but have abandoned it to engage in other trades more in line with their abilities.”[148]

After this, although its vocation remained in the principle of pushing the Jews to become farming “settlers”, the Society for Colonisation renounced this objective. It set itself the task of helping “the excessively disorderly emigration of Jews from Russia”, “it was concerned with providing information to the emigrants, defending their interests, being the connection with host countries”, and it had to modify its statutes, which had been bequeathed by Baron Hirsch. Large sums were allocated “to raise the standard of living of Jews in their places of residence”; from 1898 onwards, “action was taken among the population within Russia itself,” and in the existing Jewish agricultural colonies the “introduction of more modern tools and methods of cultivation”, “the granting of an advantageous credit for the improvement of the soil.” However, again, “despite the large sums invested in this sector, agricultural activity remained relatively stagnant.”[149] Conversely, migratory flows outside Russia continued to increase, “in direct connection with the craft crisis and the gradual elimination of small trade and factories”; this flow “reached its peak… in 1906”, but was not “able to absorb the annual surplus of the population” of the Jews. It should be noted that “the great mass of emigrants was destined for the United States”—for example, in 1910, they were 73%.[150] “From 1881 to 1914, 78.6% of emigrants from Russia landed in the United States.”[151] From this period, we can thus see what will be the general movement of our century. (Note that at the entrance to the American territory no paper certifying craftsmanship was required, and it followed that during the first six years of the century 63% of Russian immigrants “engaged in industry”. This meant that those who left Russia for America were exclusively artisans? This could offer an explanation to the question as to why the artisans did not go to the Central provinces, which were now open to them? But it is also necessary to consider that

for many immigrants, and especially for those who had neither resources nor trade, no other answer was possible than that of recognising themselves as part of the "category notoriously well accepted by the Americans."[152])

One is struck by how few of the emigrants are the individuals belonging to the cultivated stratum, the one allegedly the most persecuted in Russia. These people did not emigrate. From 1899 to 1907, they were barely 1% to do so.[153] The Jewish intelligentsia did not in any way tend to emigrate: it was, in its eyes, a way of escaping the problems and fate of Russia at the very moment when opportunities for action were opening up. As late as 1882, the resolution of a Congress of Jewish public figures "called for a definite rejection of the idea of organising an emigration, for this idea contradicts the dignity of the Russian State."[154] In the last years of the nineteenth century, "the new generation wanted to be actively involved in history… and across the board, from the outside as well as from the inside, it has gone from defensive to offensive… Young Jews now want to write their own history, to affix the seal of their will to their destiny, and also, to a just extent, on the destiny of the country in which they live."[155]

The religious wing of Russian Judaism also denounced emigration, considering it as a break with the vivifying roots of East European Judaism.

The secular efforts of the new generation were primarily concerned with a vast program of specifically Jewish instruction, culture and literature in Yiddish, the only ones capable of creating a link with the mass of the people. (According to the census of 1897, only 3% of Russian Jews recognised Russian as their mother tongue, while Hebrew seemed forgotten and no one thought it could be reborn.) It was proposed to create a network of libraries specially designed for Jews, newspapers in Yiddish (the daily *Der Freynd* appeared in 1903; and it sold like hot cakes in the villages; not belonging to any political party, it nevertheless sought to give political training[156]). It was in the 90s that took shape "the grandiose metamorphosis of the amorphous Jewish mass into a nation, the Jewish Renaissance."[157]

One after the other, authors writing in Yiddish became very popular: Mendele Mocher-Sefarim, Scholom-Aleichem, Itzhak-Leibush Peretz. And the poet Bialik, to follow the movement, translated his own poems into Yiddish. In 1908, this trend reached its peak at the Tchernovtsy Conference, which proclaimed Yiddish as the "national language of the Jewish people" and advocated the translation of all printed texts into Yiddish.[158]

At the same time, considerable efforts were made for Jewish culture in the Russian language. Thus the ten volumes of the *Jewish Library*, of historical and literary content[159]; the Petersburg magazines born from 1881, *Rassvet* ("The Dawn"), then *Rousski Evrei* ("The Russian Jew"). (They soon stopped appearing: "these publications did not meet the support of the Jewish public itself"[160]). The magazine *Voskhod* ("The Break of Day") opened its pages to all Jewish authors, translating all the novelties, offering a place of choice for studies on Jewish history,[161] (May we, Russians, show the same interest in our own history!). For the time being, "the dominant role in the public life of Russian Judaism" was held by the "Jewish Petersburg": "towards the middle of the 90s, [it is in Petersburg that] almost all senior management was formed, the Jewish intellectual aristocracy"; all the talents are in Petersburg.[162] According to an approximate calculation, only 67,000 Jews spoke Russian fluently in 1897, but it was the cultivated elite. And already "the whole younger generation" in Ukraine in the 90s was raised in Russian, and those who went to study in the high schools completely lost contact with Jewish education.[163]

There was not, strictly speaking, a slogan of the type: *Assimilation*! We must blend into the Russian element! Nor an appeal to renounce one's nationality. Assimilation was a commonplace phenomenon, but it created a link between Russian Judaism and the future of Russia.[164] Moreover, Sliosberg refutes the term *assimilation*: "Nothing was more opposed to the truth" than to say that "assimilated persons considered themselves… Russians under the Mosaic Law." On the contrary, "the appetite for Russian culture did not exclude confessing the traditions of Hebrew culture."[165] However, after the disillusionment of the 80s, "certain Jewish intellectuals, deeply imbued with the idea of assimilation, felt a break in their conception of public life."[166] Soon, "there soon was only one Jewish organisation left, one party defending assimilation. However… while it had given up arms as a theory, it remained a very real part of the life of the Jews of Russia, at least among those who lived in the big cities."[167] But it was decided to "break the link between emancipation… and… assimilation"—in other words: to obtain one and not the other, to gain equality but without the

loss of Jewishness.[168] In the 90s, *Voskhod*'s primary objective was to fight for the equal rights of Jews in Russia.[169]

A "Defence Office" for the Jews of Russia had been formed in Saint Petersburg at the beginning of the century, the members of which were eminent advocates and men of letters. (Before them, Baron Hirsch had been the only one to work as they did: it was to him that all the grievances of the Jews went.) Sliosberg speaks to us in detail about its founders.[170]

During those years, "the Jewish spirit awoke for the struggle", the Jews were assisted to "a strong thrust of their self-consciousness, public and national"—but a conscience now devoid of any religious form: "The villages deserted by the most fortunate…, the villages abandoned by the young people, gone to join the city…, the galloping urbanisation" undermined the religion "in broad sections of the Jewish population from the 90s", and caused the authority of the rabbis to fall. The scholars of the Talmudic schools themselves were seduced by secularisation.[171] (That being said, the biographical notes of the *Jewish Encyclopædia* concerning the generation that grew up at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries often include the words "received a traditional religious education".)

On the other hand, as we have pointed out, what developed with unpredictable force and in an unexpected form was *palestinophilia*.

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The events in Russia could not but be perceived by the Jews of Russia and by the Russians involved in public life in the light of what was happening at the same time in Europe: contacts were then free and frequent between educated people and the borders were permeable to ideas and events.

European historians point to a "nineteenth-century anti-Semitism… a growing animosity towards Jews in Western Europe, where, however, it seemed that we were making great strides towards its disappearance."[172] Up to Switzerland where the Jews, in the middle of the century, had not been able to obtain freedom of residence in the townships, the freedom to trade or to exercise handicrafts. In France, it was the blast of the Dreyfus Affair. In Hungary, "the old landed aristocracy… accused the Jews… of having ruined it"; In Austria and in the present-day Czech Republic, at the end of the nineteenth century, an "anti-Semitic movement" was spreading, and "the petty *bourgeoisie*… fought the social-democratic proletariat with anti-Jewish slogans."[173] In 1898, bloody pogroms took place in Galicia. The rise in all countries of the *bourgeoisie* "increased the influence of the Jews, grouped in large numbers in capitals and industrial centres… In cities such as Vienna and Budapest…, the press, the theatre, the bar, the medical profession, found in their ranks a percentage of Jews much higher than their proportion in the population as a whole. Those years mark the beginning of the great fortunes of certain Jewish merchants and bankers."[174]

But it was in Germany that the anti-Jewish tendencies manifested themselves with the greatest insistence. Let us first name Richard Wagner (as early as 1869). In the 70s conservative and clerical circles demanded that the rights of German Jews should be restricted and that any new Jewish immigration should be banned. From the end of the 70s, the "intellectual circles themselves," whose spokesman was the Prussian historian Heinrich von Treitschke, said: "The agitators of today have well perceived the mindset of society which regards the Jews as our national misfortune"; "The Jews never succeed in merging with the peoples of Western Europe", and show hatred towards Germanism. Then comes Karl Eugen Duhring, made famous for his polemic with Marx and Engels[*]: "The Jewish question is a simple matter of race, and the Jews are a race that is not only foreign but irremediably and ontologically bad." Then comes the philosopher Edward Hartman. In the political sphere, this movement led to the first international anti-Jewish congress of 1882 (in Dresden), which adopted the "Manifesto addressed to the Christian peoples and governments that are dying of Judaism", and demanded the expulsion of Jews from Germany.—But in the early 90s the anti-Jewish parties had regressed and suffered a series of setbacks on the political scene.[175]

France was also the scene if not of the emergence of an equally aggressive racial theory, at least of a broad anti-Jewish political propaganda: the one broadcast by Edouard Drumont in his *Libre Parole* from 1892. Then came "a

real competition between Socialism and anti-Semitism"; "The Socialists did not hesitate to embellish their speeches of outputs against the Jews and to lower themselves right up to anti-Semitic demagogy… A social anti-Semitic fog enveloped the entirety of France."[176] (Very similar to the propaganda of the populists in Russia in the years 1881–1882.) And it was then that in 1894 the thunderous Dreyfus Affair broke out. "In 1898, it [anti-Semitism] reached its climax throughout Western Europe—in Germany, France, Great Britain and the United States."[177]

The Russian press of the years 1870–1890 also issued some anti-Jewish statements, but without the strong theoretical colouring they had in Germany, nor the exacerbated social violence in Austria-Hungary and France. Let us recall the accounts of Vsevolod Krestovsky (*Egyptian Darkness*, among others) and some crude newspaper articles.

It is appropriate to set apart the newspaper *Novoïe Vremia* ("The New Times"), which owed its success to its engaged positions to the "Slav movement" linked to the Russo-Turkish war for the defence of the Balkans. But when "from the theatre of operations were received reports on acts of plunder perpetrated by intendants and suppliers, these suppliers "of Jewish origin" appeared as the incarnation of all Russian Judaism, and *Novoïe Vremia* adopted a frankly anti-Semitic stance." Beginning in the 80s, the newspaper did more than "go into the camp of reactionaries", "it went beyond all the limits of hatred and improbity in the Jewish question. The warning cry 'Beware the Jew!' resounded for the first time in the columns of *Novoïe Vremia*. The paper insisted on the need to take firm measures against the Jews' 'stranglehold' over Russian science, literature and art…" It did not miss an opportunity to denounce the fact of "withdrawing from military service."[178]

These attacks on Jews, both abroad and in Russia, stirred Vladimir Solovyov, and in 1884 he vigorously criticised them: "The Judaeans have always behaved to us in the manner of the Judaeans, and we, Christians, have not yet learned to behave with Judaism in a Christian way"; "With regard to Judaism, the Christian world *in its mass* has so far shown only an irrational jealousy or a feeble indifference." No, "it is not Christian Europe that is tolerant of Jews, it is the Europe of unbelievers."[179]

The growing importance of the Jewish question for Russia, Russian society understood it only half a century behind its government. It was only after the Crimean War that "the emerging Russian public opinion began to conceive the existence of a Jewish problem in Russia."[180] But there needed to elapse a few more decades before it understood the *primacy* of this question. "Providence has brought the greatest part of the Jewish people to our country, and the strongest," wrote Vladimir Solovyov in 1891.[181]

The year before, with the support of some sympathisers, Solovyov wrote a "Protest" in which it was said that "the sole cause of the so-called Jewish question" was the abandonment of all righteousness and humanity, "a senseless craze for blind national egoism." "To stir up racial and religious hatred, which is so contrary to the spirit of Christianity…, deeply perverts society and can lead to a return to barbarism…" "We must strongly denounce the anti-Semitic movement, "even if only through the instinct of national survival."[182]

According to the account given to him by M. Doubnov, Solovyov collected more than a hundred signatures, including those of Tolstoy and Korolenko[*]. But the editors of all the newspapers had been ordered not to publish this protest. Solovyov wrote a scalding letter to Tsar Alexander III, but was told that if he persisted, he would be punished with an administrative measure. He gave up.[183]

Just as in Europe, the multifaceted thrust of Jewish ambitions could not fail to arouse anxiety among the actors of Russian public life here, a fierce opposition there, and there again, on the contrary, sympathy. And, in some, a political calculation. Like the Will of the People in 1881, who understood the profit to be drawn from the Jewish question (at the time, it was in the direction of persecution), the radical and liberal circles of the time, namely the left wing of society, conceived and made theirs for a long time still the idea that the Jewish question could be used as a political map of the struggle against the autocracy: it was necessary to repeat over and over that the only way to obtain equality in rights for the Jews was the definitive overthrow of the power of the tsars. From the Liberals to the Bolsheviks. Passing by the S.-R., all have never ceased to involve the Jews—some with real sympathy—to use them as a convenient asset in the anti-monarchical combat. This asset, the revolutionaries never let it go, they exploited it without the least scruple until

1917.

However, these various tendencies and debates in the newspapers did not affect the attitude of the *people* towards the Jews in *Greater Russia*. Many testimonies confirm this.

Thus J. Teitel, a man who lived for a long time in deep Russia and frequented common people, affirms that “any racial or national hostility is foreign to the common people.”[184] Or, in memoires left by the Viazemsky princes, this episode: there was at Korobovka Hospital, a district of Ousmansky, a somewhat inconsiderate Russian physician, Doctor Smirnov; the peasants did not like him, and his successor, the devoted Doctor Szafran, immediately benefited from the affection and gratitude of all the peasants in the neighbourhood. Another confirmation, inspired by the experience of the prisoners of the years 1880–1890: P. F. Iakoubovitch-Melchine writes: “It would be an ungrateful task to seek, even in the scum of our people, the least trace of anti-Semitism.”[185] And it was indeed because they sensed this that the Jews of a small town in Belarus addressed a telegram at the beginning of the twentieth century to Madam F. Morozova, the wife of a wealthy merchant, who was in charge of charity: “Give us this much. The synagogue burned down. You know we have the same God.” And she sent the sum requested.

Deep down, neither the Russian liberal press nor the Jewish press have ever accused the Russian people of any land-based anti-Semitism. What both of them repeated relentlessly was that anti-Semitism in the popular mass, had been completely fabricated and fuelled by the government. The very formula “Autocracy, Orthodoxy, Nationality” was felt in Jewish circles as a formula directed against the Jews.

In the middle of the twentieth century, we can read from a Jewish writer: “In tsarist Russia, anti-Semitism had no deep roots among the people… In the broad masses of the people, there was practically no anti-Semitism; moreover, the very question of relations with Judaism did not arise… It was only in certain parts of what was called the Pale of Settlement, and mainly in Ukraine since the time of Polish domination, that, due to certain circumstances on which there is no need to dwell here, a certain tendency towards anti-Semitism manifested itself in the peasantry,”[186] that is perfectly true. And one could add: Bessarabia. (One can judge of the antiquity of these feelings and circumstances by reading Karamzin[*]: the Cossacks who surrounded the False Dmitry[**]—of the Cossacks of the Don, obviously—treated the Russians of *Jidy* (Jews)[187], which means that in the western provinces this word was an insult.)

And what about Russian folklore? The Dahl dictionary encompasses Great Russia, and the western provinces, and Ukraine. Editions before the revolution contain a large number of words and expressions formed on the root *jid-* (Judeo-). (Significant detail: in the Soviet edition of 1955, the entire typography of the page containing these words was revised[188], and the whole lexical “niche” between *jidkii* and *jigalo* has been entirely suppressed.) However, amongst these expressions quoted by Dahl, there are some which are inherited from the Slavonic Church where the word *jid* was by no means pejorative: it was the name of a people. There are also some that come from Polish and post-Polish practice within the Pale of Settlement. Still others were introduced into the language at the time of the Troubles, in the seventeenth century, at a time when, in Greater Russia, there was almost no contact with the Jews. These inheritances are also reflected in the dicta that Dahl mentions in their Russian form—but we can guess under the latter the southern form. (And, what is certain is that they did not leave the bowels of the Ministry of the Interior! …)

And then, let us compare these sayings with others: oh how the people created malicious adages against the Orthodox clergy! Not one, almost, is favourable to it!

A witness of Mariupol [189] (and he is not the only one, it is a well-known fact) tells us that among them, before the revolution, there was a clear distinction between the two words *evrei* (Hebrew) and *jid* (Jew). The *Evrei* was a law-abiding citizen, whose morals, conduct, and behaviour towards others did not differ in any way from the surrounding environment. While the *Jid* was the *jivoder* (the swindler). And it was not uncommon to hear: “I’m not a *Jid*, I’m an honest *Evrei*, I do not intend to dupe you.” (Such words put into the mouths of Jews, we find them in literature, and we have also read them in the pamphlets of the populists.)

This semantic differentiation, we must never lose sight of it when interpreting sayings.

All this is the trace of an old national quarrel on the territory of the West and Southwest.

For neither in Central Russia nor in the North and East, not even during the general shock of October 1905, there weren't any anti-Jewish pogroms (if there was indignation, it was against the revolutionary intellectuals in general, against their jubilation and ridicule of the Manifesto of October 17th). But this does not prevent, in the eyes of the whole world, the pre-revolutionary Russia—not the empire, but *Russia*—to bear forever the seal of infamy, that of the pogroms and the Black Hundreds. And it is indelible, encrusted in minds for yet how many centuries to come?

The anti-Jewish pogroms have always and exclusively broken out in South-Western Russia—as it was the case in 1881. And the Kichinev pogrom of 1903 was of the same nature.

*

Let us not forget that at the time the population of Bessarabia was largely illiterate, that in Kishinev there were 50,000 Jews, 50,000 Moldovans, 8,000 Russians (in fact, mainly Ukrainians, but the difference was not noted) and a few thousand others. What were the main forces responsible for the pogroms? "The delinquents of the pogroms were mainly Moldovans."[190]

The Kishinev pogrom began on April 6, the last day of the Jewish Passover and the first day of the Orthodox Passover. (This is not the first time we have observed this tragic link between anti-Jewish pogroms and the Passover of Christians: in 1881, 1882, and 1899 in Nikolaev[191]—and it fills us with extreme pain and anxiety.)

Let us use the one document that is based on a rigorous investigation carried out right after the events. This is the indictment issued by the local court prosecutor, V. N. Goremykine, who "did not call a single Jew as an accused, for which he was harshly vilified by the reactionary press."[192] (As we shall see, the court first sat in closed session to "not exacerbate the passions", and the indictment was originally published abroad in the emigrated press organ of Stuttgart *Osvobojdenie* ["Release"].[193])

The document begins with an account of "the usual clashes between Jews and Christians as happened in recent years at Easter" and "the animosity of the local population towards the Jews." It says that "two weeks before the Passover… rumours circulated in the city, announcing that there would be, during future holidays, aggressions against the Jews." A newspaper, the *Bessarabets* ("the Bessarabian"), had played a role of blaster in publishing "day after day, throughout the last few weeks, incendiary articles, strongly anti-Jewish, which did not go unnoticed among small clerks, pencil-pushers, the entire little people of Bessarabia. Among the last provocative articles in the newspaper was the one about the murder of a Christian child in the village of Doubossary, allegedly carried out by Jews for ritual purposes" (and another rumour ran that a Jew had murdered his Christian servant when she had actually committed suicide[194]).

And the police of Kishinev, what did it do? "Did not give any particular consideration to the rumours," and despite the fact that "in recent years there has been regular fighting between Jews and Christians, the Kishinev police did not take any serious preventive measures," it only reinforced the patrols "for the holidays, in the places where the crowd was going to be the densest", by adding men recruited from the local garrison.[195] The chief of police gave no clear instruction to his officers.

This is clearly the most unpardonable: repeated brawls every year for the Passover, rumours of such a content—and the police fold their arms. One more sign of the state of decline of the governmental machinery. For there are two things, one: either we let go of the empire (how many wars, how many efforts have been made to unite, for obscure reasons, Moldavia with Russia), or we safeguard the good order which must reign over its entire territory.

On the afternoon of April 6, the streets of the city is invaded by "people in celebration", with "many teenagers" wandering among the crowd, as well as angry people. The boys start throwing stones at nearby Jewish houses, throwing harder and harder, and when the commissioner and his inspectors try to arrest one of them, "they get stones in their turn." Adults then get involved. "The police took no firm measures to stop the disorders" and these led to the sacking of

two Jewish shops and a few sheds. In the evening, the disorders subsided, “no assault had been perpetrated against the Jews that day”; the police had arrested sixty people during the day.

However, “on the early morning of April 7, the very agitated Christian population began to assemble in various parts of the city and in the suburbs, in small groups which provoked Jews to clashes of increasing violence.” In the same way, from the first hour on the New Market, “more than a hundred Jews had gathered, armed with stakes and pickets, rifles even here and there, who fired a few shots. The Christians had no firearms. The Jews said: ‘Yesterday you did not scatter the Russians, today we will defend ourselves.’ And some held bottles of vitriol in their hands, which they threw at the Christians they met.” (Pharmacies were traditionally held by Jews.) “Rumours spread throughout the city, reporting that the Christians were being assaulted by the Jews; they swell from mouth to mouth and exasperate the Christian population”: one transforms “were beaten” into “were slaughtered”, one carries that the Jews have sacked the cathedral and murdered the priest. And now, “in various parts of the town, small groups of fifteen to twenty persons each, chiefly workmen, with teenagers in their lead who throw stones into the window-panes, begin to plunder the shops, the premises, the dwellings of the Jews, smashing everything inside. These groups are gradually enlarged by the passers-by.” Towards two, three o’clock in the morning, “disturbances spread in a more and more extended radius”; “the houses where icons or crosses have been exposed in windows are not affected.” “In the sacked premises, everything was totally destroyed, the goods ejected from the shops to be trampled or stolen by individuals who escorted the attackers.” They went so far as to “sack the houses of prayer of the Jews, and throw down the sacred scrolls [the Torah] in the street.” Drinking places, of course, were sacked; “The wine was poured into the street or drunk on the spot by the bandits.”

The inertia of the police, owing to the absence of a proper command, caused these crimes to be perpetrated with impunity, and this did not fail to encourage and excite the evil-doers. The police forces, left to their own devices, far from uniting their efforts, acted according to their instinct… “and the subordinate policemen were mostly mute spectators of the pogrom.” However, a phone call was made to the local garrison to call for reinforcements, but “whenever the soldiers went to a certain point, they could not find anybody there,” and “in the absence of new instructions, they remained inactive”; “They were scattered in the city in isolated groups, with no clear objective and no coordination with each other”; “They only dispersed the excited crowds.” (This garrison was not the most efficient, and, moreover, it was just after Passover: many officers and soldiers were on leave.[196]) “The inertia of the police… engendered new rumours, saying that the government would have allowed to attack the Jews, since they are enemies of the country”—and the pogrom, unleashed, inebriated, became envenomed. “The Jews, fearing for their possessions and for their lives, lost all composure, fear made them go mad. Several of them, armed with revolvers, proceeded to counter-attack to defend themselves. Ambushed on street corners, behind fences, on balconies, they began to shoot looters, but awkwardly, without aiming at their targets, so that it did nothing to help them and only aroused in the pogrom troublemakers a terrible explosion of rage. “The crowd of plunderers was seized with rage, and where the shooting had resounded, it came at once to tear everything apart and be violent towards the Jews who were there. “A shot was particularly fatal to the Jews: the man who snatched a young Russian boy, little Ostapov.” “From one, two o’clock in the afternoon, the blows of the Jews became more and more violent,” and by five o’clock they were accompanied by “a series of murders.” At half-past three in the afternoon, Governor Von Raaben, completely overwhelmed, passed an order to the chief of the garrison, General Bekman, authorising the “use of arms”. Bekman immediately had the city canvassed, and the troops, who had “ventured out” walked in good order from that moment on. “From that moment on, the troops were now able to carry out mass arrests,” and energetic measures were taken. At nightfall, the pogrom was under control.

The act stipulates the death toll: “There were 42 deaths, including 38 Jews”; “all the bodies bore traces of blows by blunt objects—clubs, shovels, stones—and some, blows of axes”; “almost all were wounded in the head, some in the chest also. They had no traces of bullets, no evidence of torture or rape either (this was confirmed by doctors’ expert opinions and autopsies, as well as by the report of the Medico-Legal Department of the Central Administration of Bessarabia); “there were 456 wounded, including 62 among the Christians…; eight were wounded by bullets… of the 394 Jewish wounded, only five were seriously injured. No trace of abuse… except for a one-eyed man whose healthy eye had been ripped out… three-quarters of the men assaulted were adults; there were three complaints of rape, two of which were prosecuted.” Seven soldiers were wounded, including a soldier who “had his face burned with vitriol”; 68 policemen received minor injuries. “There were 1,350 homes ransacked, almost a third of the houses in Kishinev: an enormous figure, the equivalent of a bombing… as for the arrests, “there were 816 on the morning of April 9”, and in

addition to the investigations into the murders, 664 persons appeared in court.

In some authors, the figures of the victims among the Jews differ from the official statistics, but the gap is not very large. The *Book of the Jews of Russia* estimates that there were 45 Jews killed, 86 seriously wounded, 1,500 houses and shops looted or destroyed.[197] Biekerman puts forward the figure of 53 dead, but maybe not all Jews.[198] The recent *Jewish Encyclopædia* (1988) states: “49 people were killed, 586 wounded, more than 1,500 houses and shops looted.”[199]

This is the official description. But we sense what is hiding behind it. We are told: “Only one person, one Jew with one eye” has had the other ripped out. We learn a little more from Korolenko in his essay *Dom no 13* (“House No. 13”).[200] This poor man was called Meer Weisman: “To my question, wrote Korolenko—did he know who did this?—, he answered with perfect serenity that he did not know, but that ‘a kid’, the son of his neighbours, had boasted that he had done it with a lead weight attached to a string.” We see then that perpetrators and victims knew each other rather well… Korolenko resumed: “It is true that what I advance, I hold of the Jews themselves, but there is no reason not to believe their sayings… Why would they have invented these details? …” And, in fact, why would the family of Bentsion Galanter, mortally hit on the head, invent that the murderers had planted nails all over his body? Was not the family of the Nisenson accountant sufficiently tried, why would it add that he had been “rinsed” in a puddle before being massacred? These details are not fiction.

But to those who were far from the events, to the agitators of public opinion, these horrors *were not enough*. What they remembered was not tragedy, misfortune, the dead, but rather: how to exploit them to strike the tsarist power? And they resorted to terrifying exaggerations. To overcome reactions of horror, to try to see clearly in the versions built up in the months and years following, would it not be minimising the tragedy? And to attract many insults? But to see it clearly is a duty, because we took advantage of the pogrom of Kishinev to blacken Russia and mark her forever of the seal of infamy. Today, all honest historical work on the subject demands a distinction between the horrible truth and the treacherous lies. The conclusion of the indictment is the following: the disorders “have reached the magnitude described only because of the inertia of the police, deprived of an adequate command… The preliminary investigation did not find evidence that the disorders had been premeditated.”[201]

These clues, no further investigation found them either.

But so be it: the Office for the Defence of the Jews, which we have already mentioned, (was attended by such eminent persons as Mr. Winaver, Mr. G. Sliosberg, Mr. Bramson, Mr. Koulicher, Mr. A. Braoudo, Mr. S. Pozner, Krohl[202]), as soon as the news of the pogrom of Kishinev reached it, it excluded from the outset all possible causes apart from that of a conspiracy fomented from above: “Who gave the order of organising the pogrom, who took the direction of the dark forces that perpetrated it?”[203] “As soon as we learned of the climate in which the killings of Kishinev took place, we did not doubt that this diabolical undertaking had been concocted by the Police Department and carried out at his command.” Although, of course, “the wretches kept their project secret,” wrote Krohl in the 40s of the 20th century.[204] “But, as convinced as we are that the killings of Kishinev were premeditated in high places, with the tacit agreement and perhaps at the initiative of Plehve, we can unmask these high-placed assassins and expose them to the light of the world only on one condition: if we have the most indisputable proofs against them. That is why we decided to send the famous lawyer Zaroudny to Kishinev.”[205] “He was the most suitable person for the mission we had entrusted to him,” “he undertook to reveal the hidden springs of the Kishinev massacre, after which the police, to divert attention, arrested a few dozens thieves and looters.”[206] (Recall that in the aftermath of the pogrom, 816 people were arrested.) Zaroudny gathered information and brought back “material of exceptional importance”. That is to say that “the chief person in charge, the organiser of the pogrom, had been the head of local security, K. Lewendal,” a gendarmerie officer who had been appointed to Kishinev shortly before the pogrom. It was “at his command that the police and the troops openly lent a hand to the assassins and the looters.”[207] He would have “totally paralysed the action of the governor.”[208] (It is known, however, that in Russia neither the police nor the troops were under the orders of the Okhrana.)

This said “exceptionally important” material, which denounced the guilty “with absolute certainty,” was never

published neither at the time or later. Why? But because, if it had been so, how could Lewendal and his accomplices escape punishment and dishonour? This material is known only by hearsay: a dealer named Pronine and a notary named Pissarjevsky would have been found several times in a certain café and, on Lewendal's instructions, would have planned the pogrom.[209] And it was after these meetings that all the police and the troops opted for the pogrom. The prosecutor Goremykine examined the charges against Lowendal and declared them unfounded.[210] (The journalist Kruchevane, whose incendiary articles had really favoured the pogrom, was stabbed in Petersburg two months later by Pinhas Dachevsky who wanted to kill him.[211])

The authorities, during this time, continued the investigation. The director of the police department, A. A. Lopoukhine (with his liberal sympathies, he was unsuspected in the eyes of the public) was quickly dispatched to Kishinev. Governor Von Raaden was dismissed, along with several other senior officials from Bessarabia; a new governor was appointed, Prince S. Urusov (soon to be a prominent K. D., and would sign the appeal to the rebellion called "Vyborg's Appeal"). A bulletin from the Minister of the Interior, Plehve, was published in *The Messenger of the Government* of April 29: in it he stated his indignation at the inaction of the authorities of Kishinev; he called on all provincial governors, city governors and police chiefs to vigorously halt all violence by taking all possible measures.[212]

The Orthodox Church also expressed itself. The Holy Synod issued a bulletin inviting the clergy to take measures to extirpate feelings of hostility towards the Jews. Some of the hierarchs, notably Father John of Kronstadt, who were very much listened to and revered by the faithful, appealed to the Christian people, expressing their disapproval, their exhortations, their appeals for appeasement. "They have substituted for the Christian holiday a sanguinary and satanic orgy."[213] And Bishop Antony (Krapovitsky) declared: "The punishment of God will befall the wretches who have spilled blood related to that of the God-Man, to His pure Mother, the apostles and the prophets… so that you know how much the Divine Spirit cherishes the Jewish people, still rejected today, and know what is His wrath against those who would want to offend Him."[214] A text on the subject was distributed to the people. (The long exhortations and explanations of the Church, however, were not unrelated to an archaic state of mind, frozen for centuries and to be surpassed by the formidable evolutions in progress.)

In the first days of May, a month after the events, an information campaign but also one of intoxication about the pogrom broke out in the Russian press as well as in the European and American ones. In Petersburg, fanatical articles spoke of assassinations of mothers and infants, of rape—sometimes of underage girls, sometimes of women under the eyes of their husbands or of their father and mother; there was talk of "torn tongues; a man was ripped open, a woman's head was pierced with nails driven in by the nostrils."[215] Less than a week had elapsed when these horrifying details appeared in the papers of the West. Western public opinion gave it full credence. The influential Jews in England relied on these fabrications and included them word for word in their public protest.[216] Should we repeat: "*No evidence of abuse or rape was observed on the bodies.*" Due to a new wave of newspaper articles, forensic pathologists were asked to submit supplementary reports. The doctor of the City Health Service, named Frenkel (who had examined the bodies in the Jewish cemetery), and another named Tchorba (who had received the dead and wounded at the hospital in the Kishinev Zemstvo between 5 P.M., the second day after the Passover, and noon, the third day, and then at the Jewish hospital), and the doctor Vassiliev (who had carried out an autopsy of thirty-five corpses)—all attested the absence of traces of torture or violence on the bodies described in the newspapers.[217] It was later learned at the trial that doctor Dorochevsky—the one who, it was thought, had supplied these frightening reports—had seen nothing of these atrocities, and declined any responsibility for the publication of the tabloids.[218] As for the prosecutor at the Criminal Chamber of Odessa, he had, in reply to a question from Lopoukhine regarding the rapes, "secretly conducted his own investigation": the accounts of the families of the victims themselves did not confirm any case of rape; the concrete cases, in the expertise, are positively excluded.[219] But who paid attention to the examinations and conclusions of doctors? Who cares about the prosecutor's specific research? All these documents may remain, turning yellow, in cabinets files!

All that the witnesses had not confirmed, all that Korolenko had not related, the authorities did not have the presence of mind to refute it. And all these *details* spread throughout the world, and took the form of a *fact* in public opinion, which they were to remain throughout the twentieth century, and which they will probably still be throughout the whole of the twenty-first century—cold, frozen, stowed forever in the name of Russia.

However, Russia, for many years now, but with increasing acuteness, knew a mad, deadly distortion between “civil society” and the government. It was a struggle to the death: for the liberal and radical circles, and even more so for the revolutionaries, any incident (true or false) discrediting the government was a blessing, and for them everything was permitted—any exaggeration, any distortion, any make-up of facts; the important thing was to humiliate power as severely as possible. For the Russian radicals, a pogrom of this gravity was a *chance* in their fight!

The government resolved to forbid all publication in the newspapers concerning the pogrom, but it was a blunder, for the rumours were re-echoed with greater force by the European and American press; All the rantings escalated with even more impunity—exactly as if there had never been any police report.

And here it was, the great offensive launched against the government of the tsar. The Bureau for the Defence of the Jews sent telegrams to all the capitals: organise protest meetings everywhere![220] A member of the Bureau wrote: “We have communicated the details of the atrocities… in Germany, France, England, the United States… The impression that our information caused was shattering; in Paris, Berlin, London and New York, there were protest meetings in which the speakers painted a frightening picture of the crimes committed by the tsarist government.”[221] Here he is, they thought, the Russian bear as it has been since the dawn of time! “These atrocities shocked the world. And now, without any restraint, the police and the soldiers have by all means *assisted the assassins and the plunderers* in perpetrating their inhuman acts.”[222] The “cursed autocracy” has marked itself with an indelible stigma! In meetings, they stigmatised the new plan of tsarism, “premeditated by it”. In the synagogues of London, they accused… the Holy Synod of having committed this killing due to religious inspiration. Some of the hierarchs of the Catholic Church also declared their disapproval. But it was by far the European and American press that showed themselves as being the most virulent (notably the press tycoon William Hearst): “We accuse the tsarist power of being responsible for the massacre of Kishinev. We declare that his guilt in this holocaust is total. It is before his door and in front of any other that the victims of this violence are exposed. “May the God of Justice descend here below to finish with Russia as He has finished with Sodom and Gomorrah… and let him evacuate this pestilential focus from the face of the earth.” “The killing of Kishinev surpasses in insolent cruelty all that has ever been recorded in any civilised nation”[223]… (including, one must believe, the extermination of the Jews in medieval Europe?).

Alas, Jews more or less circumspect, more or less stunned, joined in the same assessment of the events. And not less than thirty years after the events, the respectable jurist G. Sliosberg retains the same details in publications of emigration—(even though he himself never went to Kishinev, then or later): the nails planted in the head of the victim (he goes so far as attributing this information to the account of Korolenko!), and the rapes, and the presence of “several thousand soldiers” (the modest garrison of Kishinev had never seen as many!) who “seemed to be there to protect the perpetrators of the pogrom.”[224]

But Russia, in the field of communication, was inexperienced, unable to justify itself coherently seeing it was still unaware of the methods used for this.

Meanwhile, the so-called “cold premeditation” of the pogrom was not supported by any solid proof—none that was commensurate with the raging campaign. And although lawyer Zaroudny had already “closed his investigation and… firmly established that the chief organiser and the sponsor of the pogrom was none other than the chief of the local Okhrana, Baron Lewendal”[225]—even in this variant, the character of Lewendal did not reach the government sufficiently, it was necessary to draw a little more to reach the central power.

But here we are!—six weeks after the pogrom, in order to further stir up general indignation, and to dishonour the key figure of power, one “discovered” (no one knows by whom, but very appropriately) an “ultra-secret letter” from the Minister of Interior Plehve to the governor of Kishinev, Von Raaben (not a bulletin addressed to all the governors of the Pale of Settlement, no, but a letter addressed to him alone ten days before the pogrom), in which the minister, in rather evasive terms, gave advice: if serious disturbances occur in the province of Bessarabia, not to repress them by arms, but to use only persuasion. And now an individual, very timely there too, transmitted the text of this letter to an English correspondent in Saint Petersburg, D. D. Braham, and the latter hastened to publish it in London in the *Times* of 18 May 1903.[226]

A priori: what is the weight of a single publication in a single newspaper, which nothing corroborates—neither on the spot nor later? But it weighs as much as you want! Enormously, even! And in this case, the publication of the *Times* was supported by the protest of prominent British Jews, with Montefiore at their head (from an internationally-known family).[227]

Thanks to the climate that reigned throughout the world, this letter was a colossal success: the sanguinary intentions against the Jews of the universally abhorred tsarism, which had not yet been proved, were suddenly "attested with supporting documents." Articles and meetings had a new upsurge throughout the world. On the third day after the publication, the *New York Times* pointed out that "three days already that the letter was disclosed—and no denial occurred", and the British press has already declared it to be authentic. "What can we say about the level of civilisation of a country, of which a minister can give his signature to such exactions?"[228] The Russian government, in its awkwardness and incomprehension of the gravity of the matter, found nothing better to do than to negligently abandon a laconic denial signed by the head of the Police Department, A. Lopoukhine, and only on the ninth day after the scandalous publication of the *Times*,[229] but instead of investigating the falsification, he simply settled on expelling Braham from the territory.

One can argue with certainty that this was indeed a forgery, for several reasons. Not only because Braham never exhibited any proof of the authenticity of the letter. Not only because Lopoukhine, the declared enemy of Plehve, had himself denied this text. Not only because Prince Urusov, the great Jewish sympathiser who had succeeded Von Raaben and controlled the archives of the governorate, found no "letter of Plehve." Not only because poor Von Raaben, dismissed, his life and career broken, never, in his desperate efforts to restore his reputation, complained of having received instructions "from above"—which would have immediately restored his career and made him the idol of liberal society. The main reason lies in the fact that the State archives in Russia had nothing in common with the rigged archives of the Soviet era when any document was concocted upon request or others burned in secret. No, in the Russian archives everything was preserved, inviolably and forever. Immediately after the February Revolution, an extraordinary commission of inquiry of the Provisional Government, and, still more zealously, the "Special Commission for the Study of the History of the Pogroms," with investigators as serious as S. Dubnov, Krasny-Admoni, did not find the document in Petersburg or Kishinev, nor its record it upon entrance or exit; they found only the *translation* into English of Braham's English text (as well as papers containing "indications of severe punishment and dismissal… sanctioning any illegal action by agents responsible for the Jewish question").[230]

After 1917, what was still to be feared? But not a single witness, not a single memorialist, was able to tell the story of where this immortal telegram had fallen, or to boast of having acted as an intermediary. And Braham himself—neither at the time, nor later—didn't say a single word about it.

But this did not prevent the constitutional-Democratic newspaper *Retch* ("The Word") from writing with confidence, on 19 March 1917: "The bloodbath of Kishinev, the counter-revolutionary pogroms of 1905 were organised, as was definitively established, by the Police Department." And, in August 1917, at the Moscow State Conference, the President of the Special Commission of Inquiry publicly declared that he would "soon present the police department's documents concerning the organisation of anti-Jewish pogroms"—but neither soon nor later, neither the Commission, nor, subsequently, the Bolsheviks exhibited any document of this kind. Thus the lie encrusted itself, practically up to now! … (In my *November 16*, one of the characters evokes the pogrom of Kishinev, and in 1986 the German publisher adds an explanatory note in this regard stating: "Anti-Jewish Pogrom, carefully prepared, which lasted two days. The Minister of the Interior Plehve had conjured the governor of Bessarabia, in the event of a pogrom, not to use firearms."[231]) In the recent *Jewish Encyclopædia* (1996) we read this statement: "In April 1903, the new Minister of the Interior, Plehve, organised with his agents a pogrom in Kishinev."[232] (Paradoxically, we read in the previous tome: "The text of Plehve's telegram published in the *Times* of London… is held by most scholars as being a fake"[233]).

And here: the false story of the Kishinev pogrom made much more noise than the real, cruel and authentic one. Will the point be made one day? Or will it take yet another hundred years?

The incompetence of the tsarist government, the decrepitude of its power, had manifested itself on various occasions, in Transcaucasia, for example, during the killing spree between the Armenians and Azeris, but the government was declared guilty only in the affair of Kishinev.

"The Jews," wrote D. Pasmanik, "have never imputed the pogrom to the people, they have always accused the power and the administration exclusively… No facts could ever shake this opinion, a furthermore perfectly superficial opinion."[234] And Biekerman emphasised that it was a matter of public knowledge that pogroms were for the government a form of struggle against the revolution. More circumspect minds reasoned thus: if in the recent pogroms no technical preparation by the power is attested, "the state of mind which reigns in Saint Petersburg is such that any virulent judeophobe will find among the authorities, from the minister to the last sergeant of town, a benevolent attitude towards him." Yet the Kishinev trial, which took place in the autumn of 1903, showed exactly the opposite.

For the liberal and radical opposition, this trial was to be transformed into a battle against the autocracy. Were sent as "civil parties" eminent lawyers, Jews and Christians—Mr. Karabchevsky, O. Gruzenberg, S. Kalmanovitch, A. Zaroudny, N. Sokolov. The "brilliant left-wing advocate" P. Pereverzev and a few others joined as *defenders* of the accused "so that they would not be afraid to tell the court… who had prompted them to start the carnage"[235]—to clarify: to say that it was the power that had armed them. The "civil parties" demanded that further investigation be carried out and that the "real culprits" should be placed on the stand. The authorities did not publish the transcripts so as not to exacerbate the passions in the city of Kishinev, nor those already white-hot of world opinion. Things were all the easier: the squad of activists who surrounded the "civil parties" made their own reports and sent them through the world, via Romania, for publication. This, however, did not modify the course of the trial. The killers' faces were scrutinized, but the culprits were undoubtedly the authorities—guilty only, it is true, of not having intervened in a timely manner. At that point, the group of lawyers split a collective statement stating that "if the court refuses to bring to justice and punish the main culprits of the pogrom"—that is, not some ordinary Governor Von Raaben (he no longer interested anyone), but indeed Minister Plehve himself and the central government of Russia—"they [the defenders] will have nothing more to do in this trial." For they "encountered such hostility on the part of the court that it gave them no possibility… to defend freely and in conscience the interests of their clients, as well as those of justice."[236] This new tactic of the lawyers, which constituted a purely political approach, proved to be quite fertile and promising; it made a great impression on the whole world. "The action of lawyers has been approved by all the best minds in Russia."[237]

The trial before the Criminal Division of Odessa was now proceeding in order. The prognostications of Western newspapers that "the trial of Kishinev will only be a masquerade, a parody of justice,"[238] were not confirmed in any way. The accused, in view of their number, had to be divided into several groups according to the gravity of the charge. As mentioned above, there were no Jews among the accused.[239] The chief of the gendarmerie of the province had already announced in April that out of 816 people arrested, 250 had been dismissed for inconsistency of the charges against them, 446 had immediately been the subject of judicial decisions (as evidenced in the *Times*), and "persons convicted by the court have been sentenced to the heaviest penalties"; about 100 were seriously charged, including 36 accused of murder and rape (in November, they will be 37). In December, the same chief of the gendarmerie announced the results of the trial: deprivation of rights, property, and penal colony (seven years or five years), deprivation of rights and disciplinary battalion (one year and one and a half years). In all, 25 convictions and 12 acquittals.[240] The real culprits of real crimes had been condemned, the ones we have described. The condemnations, however, were not tender—"the drama of Kishinev ends on a usual contradiction in Russia: in Kishinev, criminals seem to be subjected to a rigorous judicial repression," the *American Jewish Yearbook* stated, astonished.[241]

In the spring of 1904, the Cassation proceedings in Petersburg were made public.[242] And in 1905 the Kishinev pogrom was once again examined in the Senate; Winaver took the floor to prove nothing new.

In reality, the affair of the Kishinev pogrom had inflicted a hard lesson on the tsarist government by revealing to it that a State that tolerates such infamy is a scandalously impotent State. But the lesson would have been equally clear without poisonous falsifications or false additions. Why did the simple truth about Kichinev's pogrom seem insufficient? Presumably because this truth would have reflected the true nature of the government—a sclerotic organisation, guilty of bullying the Jews, but which remained unsteady and incoherent. However, with the aid of lies, it

was represented as a wise persecutor, infinitely sure of himself, and evil. Such an *enemy* could only deserve annihilation.

The Russian government, which for a long time already had been largely surpassed on the international stage, did not understand, either on the spot nor afterwards, what a shocking defeat it had just wiped out there. This pogrom soiled a stinking stain on *all* of Russian history, all the ideas that the world had of Russia *as a whole;* the sinister gleam of fire projected by it announced and precipitated the upheavals which were soon to shake the country.

Footnotes

1. *J. Larine*, Evrei i antisemitizm v SSSR (The Jews and anti-Semitism in the USSR), M.L., 1929, p. 140.
2. *G.V. Sliosberg*, Diela minouvchikh dniei: Zapiski ruskogo evreia (Notes of a Jew of Russia), 3 vols., Paris, 1933–1934, vol. 2, pp. 206–209.
3. *Hessen*, t. 2, p. 231.

- Mikhail Vasilyevich Lomonosov (1711–1765): great scholar and Russian poet, representative of the Enlightenment in Russia. Of modest origin, he is the prototype of the genius born into the people. The University of Moscow bears his name.

4. JE*, t. 13, p. 52.
5. *Ibidem*, t. 13, pp. 52–53.
6. *Sliosberg*, t. 1, p. 92; t. 2, p. 89.

- Konstantin Petrovich Pobedonostsev (1827–1907) Statesman, member of the Council of the Empire since 1872, attorney general of the Holy Synod, preceptor of Nicholas II. Exercised great influence over Alexander III.

7. *Ibidem*, t. 2, p. 33.

- An allusion to the *affirmative action* setting minimum allowances for the admission of ethnic minorities to the United States.

8. SJE, t. 6, p. 854.
9. *I. M. Troitsky*, Evrei v rousskoi chkole (The Jews in the Russian School), BJWR-1, p. 359.
10. *P. D. Ilinsky*, Vospominaniya (Memoires), Biblioteka-fund "Ruskie Zarubejnie" (Library and Archives), "Russian Emigration" (BFER), collection 1, A-90, p. 2.
11. *Sliosberg*, t. 2, p. 90.
12. *N. V. Volkov-Mouromtsev*, Iounost. Ot Viazmy do Feodosii (Youth, From Viazma to Feodosiia), 2nd ed., M., Rousski Pout, Graal, 1997, p. 101.
13. *I. E. Temirov*, Vospominaniia (Memoires). BFER, collection 1, A-29, p. 24.
14. JE, t. 12, p. 58.
15. *A. Lvov*, Novaia gazeta, New York, 5–11 Sept. 1981, No. 70, p. 26.
16. JE, t. 13, pp. 54–55.
17. *Ibidem*, t. 16, p. 205.

- Samufi Yakovlevich Marchak (1887–1964) Russian man of letters of the Soviet era.

18. *Ibidem*, t. 13, p. 55.
19. SJE, t. 6, p. 854.
20. JE, t. 13, p. 55.
21. *Sliosberg*, t. 1, p. 161.
22. *S. V. Pozner*, Evrei v obschei chkole K istorii zakonodatelstva i pravitelstvennoi politiki v oblasti evreiskogo voprosa (The Jews in the Common School. For the History of the Legislation and State Policy in the Field of the Jewish Question), Saint Petersburg, Razum, 1914, pp. 54–55.
23. *Cf. Sliosberg*, t. 2, p. 93.

- Nikolai Pavlovich Bogolepov (1847–1901) lawyer, Minister of National Education. Mortally wounded in the attack perpetrated by P. Karpovitch.

24. *A. Goldenweiser*, Pravovoie polojeniie evreiev v rossii (The legal situation of Jews in Russia), LMJR-1, p. 149.
25. *Sliosberg*, t. 1, pp. 127–128; t. 3, pp. 290–292, 301.

26. *J. L. Teitel*, Iz moiei jizni za 40 let (Stories of my life over forty years), Paris, J. Povolotsky and Co, 1925, pp. 170–176.
27. *J. M. Troitsky*, Evrei v rousskoi chkole (The Jews in the Russian School), *op. cit.*, p. 358.
28. JE, t. 10, pp. 780–781.

- Vera Ivanovna Zasulich (1849–1919): revolutionary populist linked to Netchayev. Shot at the commander of the Saint Petersburg plaza (1873). Acquitted. Having become a Marxist, she was one of the leaders of the Menshevik party.
    - In the Journal of a writer for the month of February 1876.
    29. *Ibidem*, t. 12, p. 315.
    30. *S. L. Kutcherov*, Evrei v rousskoi advokatoure (The Jews in the Russian Bar), BJWR-1, p. 402.
    31. JE*, t. 1, pp. 469–470.
        - Maxime Moiseyevich Winaver (1862–1926): a lawyer born in Warsaw, one of the founders of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, of the Cadet party (1905), deputy in the Duma (1906). Immigrated to France in 1919.

32. *Goldenweizer*, BJWR-1, p. 131.
33. *Kurcherov*, BJWR-1*, p. 404.
34. JE, t. 1, pp. 471–472.
35. *Kurcherov, Ibidem*, p. 405.
36. *Ibidem.*

- Ivan Grigorievich Cheglovitov (1861–1918) Minister of Justice in 1906–1915, President of the Council of the Empire. Shot without judgement by the Bolsheviks in retaliation for the failed assassination of Fanny Kaplan against Lenin.
    37. JE, t. 6, p. 118.
    - Old believers are adepts of the “old faith”, the one before the reforms imposed by the Patriarch Nikon in the seventeenth century. They were persecuted.
        - Doukhobors are “spirit fighters”, a religious sect dating back to the seventeenth century, which denies the Church as an institution, the state, and professes a kind of rationalistic spiritualism.
            - See *supra* (p. 245).

38. JE, t. 16, p. 116.
39. *Ibidem*, t. 12, pp. 394–395.
40. *Sliosberg*, t. 2, p. 94.
41. *V. Posse*, Evreiskoi zassiliie (The Jewish Violence), Slovo, Saint Petersburg, 1909, 14 (27) March, p. 2.
42. *Sliosberg*, t. 1, p. 198.
43. JE, t. 7, p.34.
44. Obschii svod po Imperii rezoultatov razrabotki dannykh pervoi vseobschei perepisi naseleniia, proizvedionnoi 28 ianvaria 1897 g. (General corpus of results for the empire of the data of the first general census of the population carried out on January 28, 1897), t. 2, Saint Petersburg, 1905, pp. 374–386.
45. JE*, t. 7, p. 763.
46. *Ibidem**, t. 1, p. 836.
47. *Sliosberg*, t. 3, p. 220.
48. *Ibidem*, t. 1, p. 259.
49. *Ibidem*, t. 2, pp. 177–178.
50. *V. A. Maklakov* (1905–1906), Sb. M. M. Winaver i rousskaia obschestvennost natchala XX veka (Collection M. M. Winaver and Russian civil society in the early twentieth century), Paris, 1937, p. 63.
51. *D. O. Linsky*, O natsionalnom samosoznanii ruskogo evreia—Rossia i evrei (About the national consciousness of the Jew of Russia), in RaJ, p. 145.
52. *Hessen*, t. 2, p. 210; JE, t. 11, pp. 537–538.
53. SJE, t. 2, pp. 313–314.
54. *Larine*, p. 71.
55. *V. S. Mandel*, Konservativnyie i razrouchitelnyie elementy v evreistve (Conservative elements and destructive elements among Jews), RaJ, p. 202.
56. *Goldenweiser*, RaJ, p. 148.
57. *Sliosberg*, t. 2, pp. 51, 197, 188, 193, 195.
58. *Ibidem*, pp. 22–24.
59. *Ibidem*, pp. 183–185.
60. *Teirel*, pp. 36–37, 47.
61. *Volkov-Mouromrsev*, pp. 98, 101.

62. *S. Dimanstein*, Revolioutsionnoie dvijeniie sredi evreiev (The Revolutionary Movement Among the Jews), *op. cit.*, p. 108.
63. *Goldenweiser*, BJWR-1, p. 114.
64. JE, t. 14, p. 157.
65. *Sliosberg*, t. 2, pp. 175–176.
66. *Hessen*, t. 2, p. 232.
67. *Prince B. A. Chetinine*, Khoziaine Moskvy (The Master of Moscow), Istoritcheski vestnik (The Historical Messenger), 1917, t. 148, p. 459.
68. *Sliosberg*, t. 2, pp. 44–45.
69. *Ibidem*, pp. 43–44.

- Sergey Alexandrovich: grand-duke, brother of Alexander III, governor-general of Moscow. Assassinated in February 1905.
    - Ivan Andreyevich Krylov (1769–1844): famous Russian publicist and fabulist who denounces in his writings the defects of society and the negligence of the rulers.

38. *Ibidem*, pp. 31, 42–50, 60–63.
39. *Ibidem*, pp. 7, 174.
40. Doneseniie ruskogo posla Izvolskogo iz Vatikana (Report of the Russian Ambassador to the Vatican, Izvolski), 7 (19) April 1892, Izvestia, 1930, 23 May, p. 2.
41. SJE, t. 5, p. 474.
42. JE, t. 11, pp. 336–338.
43. *Sliosberg*, t. 2, pp. 180–182.
44. JE*, t. 7, p. 594.
45. Novoie Vremia, 1909, 9 (22) Dec., p. 6.
46. JE, t. 12, pp. 601–602.

- The Karaites or Karaïmes (word meaning “attached” to the letter): a Jewish sect that rejects the orthodox doctrine of the rabbis, admits only the Old Testament and some oral traditions. The Karaites survive in small settlements in Crimea, Odessa, Southern Russia, as well as in Poland and Lithuania.

79. *J. Parks*, Evrei sredi narodov Obzor pritchin antisemitima (The Jews among Peoples: An Overview of the Causes of Anti-Semitism), Paris, YMCA Press, 1932, p. 182.
80. *V. V. Leontovitch*, Istoriia liberalizma v Rossii 1762–1914 (History of liberalism in Russia: 1762–1914), transl. of the German, 2nd ed., M., Rousski Pout, 1995, pp. 251–252. French translation to Fayard Ed., Paris, 1987.
81. *V. V. Choulguine*, “Chto nam v nikh ne nravitsa”: Ob anti-Semiticism v Rossii (“What we do not like about them”: On anti-Semitism in Russia), Paris, 1929, pp. 185–186.
82. *Parks*, pp. 153, 155, 233.
83. Sbornik materalov ob ekonomitcheskom polojenii evreiev v Rossii (Collection of materials on the economic situation of Jews in Russia), vol. 2, St., Evreiskoie Kolonizatsionnoie Obschestvo (Jewish Colonising Association), 1904, p. 64.
84. Evreiskaia piteïnaia torgovlia v Rossii. Statistitcheski Vremennik Rossiiskoy Imperii (The Jewish Trade of Spirits in Russia, Statistical Yearbook of the Russian Empire), Series III, Book 9, Saint Petersburg, 1886, p. V-X.
85. *Sliosberg*, t. 2, p. 230.
86. Evreiskaya piteinaia torgovlia v Rossii (Jewish trade of spirits in Russia), *op. cit.*
87. JE, t. 2, pp. 235–238.
88. *Cf. Sliosberg*, t. 2, p. 55.
89. *P. Miliukov*, Evreiski vopros v rossii (The Jewish Question in Russia), Schit: Literatourny sbornik (The Shield: Literary Collection) edited by L. Andreev, M. Gorky and F. Sologoub, 3rd ed., M. Rousskoie Obschestvo dlia izoutcheniia evreiskoi jizni (Russian Association for the Study of Jewish Life), 1916, p. 170.
90. JE, t. 5, pp. 821–822.
91. *Ibidem*, t. 5, pp. 821–822.
92. *Ibidem*, t. 1, p. 422.
93. Fabritchno-zavodskie predpriatia Rossiskoi Imperii (Factories and Plants of the Russian Empire), 2nd ed., Council of Congresses of Industry and Commerce, 1914, No. 590.

- Hemeralopia (in Russian: kourinaïa slepota = chicken blindness) weakening or loss of vision in low light, especially at dusk.

94. *L. Trotsky*, Moia jizn : Opyt avtobiografii (My Life: autobiographical), t. 1, Berlin, Granit, 1930, pp. 42–43.
95. JE, t. 7, p. 734.
96. JE, t. 1, p. 423.

97. *Ibidem.*
98. *Ibidem.*
99. *Larine*, pp. 27, 68–69, 170.
100. SJE, t. 7, p. 337.
101. *Larine*, p. 70.
102. *I. M. Dijour*, Evrei v ekonomitchesköjizni Rossii (The Jews in the Economic Life of Russia), BJWR-l *, p. 172.
103. *Ibidem**, p. 173.
104. *Larine*, p.69.
105. JE, t. 1, p. 423.
106. *Dijour*, SJE-1, p. 173.
107. *A. Menes*, Evreiski vopros v Vostotchnoï Evrope (The Jewish Question in Eastern Europe), JW-1, p. 146.
108. SJE, t. 7, p. 368.
109. JE, t. 13, p. 646.
110. *Ibidem*, p. 662.
111. RJE, t. 1, p. 171.
112. *Ibidem*, p. 264.
113. *Sliosberg*, t. 2, p. 231.
114. RJE, t. 1, p. 171.
115. *Dijour*, BJWR-1, pp. 163–174.
116. JE, t. 11, p. 697.
117. SJE, t. 7, p. 369; RJE, t. 1, pp. 315–316; JE, t. 6, p. 527.
118. *M. Vernatsky*, Evrei i rousskoie narodnoie khoziaistvo (The Jews and the Russian Economy), p. 30.
119. *Choulguine*, pp. 128–129.

- Vladimir Yossifovich Gourko (1863–1917): Deputy Minister of the Interior in 1906, elected member of the Council of the Empire since 1912. Emigrated after the Civil War.

120. Vf Gourko, Oustoi narodnogo khoziastva v Rossii: Agrarno-ekonomitcheskie etiudy (The Foundations of the National Economy in Russia: Agrarian and Economic Studies), Saint Petersburg, 1902, p. 199.
121. *Dijour*, BJWR-1, p. 176.
122. SJE, t. 7, p. 369.
123. *Dijour*, BJWR-1, pp. 178–179; JE, t. 13, p. 660; SJE, t. 7, p. 369.
124. JE, t. 13, pp. 651–652.
125. JE, t. 6, p. 527.
126. *Dijour*, BJWR-1, pp. 174–175; SJE, t. 6, pp. 670–671.
127. JE, t. 12, p. 734; SJE, t. 6, pp. 670–671.
128. SJE, t. 2, pp. 313–314.
129. *I. M. Bickerman*, Rossiia i rousskoie evreistvo (Russia and Russian Judaism), RJE, pp. 84–85, 87.
130. *E. Finkelstein*, Evrei v SSSR. Pout v XXI vek (The Jews in the USSR. Entry into the 21st Century), Strana i mir: Obschetv. Polititcheski, ekonomitcheski i koultournofilosfski journal (The Country and the World: Socio-political, Economic, Cultural and Philosophical Review), Munich, 1989, no. 1 (49), p. 70.
131. *Sliosberg*, t. 1, p. 145.
132. *M.A. Krol*, Stranitsy moeï jizni (Pages of my life), t. 1, New York, Union of Russian Jews in New York, 1944, p. 267.
133. *Krol., op. cit.*, pp. 260–261, 267, 299.
134. JE, t. 1, pp. 60–61.
135. *Ibidem*, t. 8, p. 466.
136. *Ibidem*, t. 11, p. 924.
137. *Ibidem*, pp. 924–925.
138. *Sliosberg*, t. 2, pp. 32, 96–102.
139. JE, t. 7, p. 504.
140. SJE, t. 2, p. 365.
141. *Sliosberg*, t. 2, pp. 29, 98–100.
142. JE, t. 16, pp. 264–268.
143. *G. I. Aronson*, V borbe za natsionalnye i granjdanskie prava: Obschestvennye telchénia v rousskom evreistve (In the struggle for civil and national rights: Social currents among the Jews of Russia), BJWR-1, p. 212.
144. JE, t. 7, p. 507; *Sliosberg*, t. 2, pp. 34–41; SJE, t. 7, p. 366.
145. *Sliosberg*, t. 2, pp. 27–30.

146. JE, t. 2, pp. 534–535.
147. *Ibidem*, t. 7, p. 504.
148. Gosudarslvcnnaia Duma—Vtoroi sozyv (State Duma, 2nd Legislature), Stenogramme, Session 2, Saint Petersburg, 1907, Meeting 24, 9 April 1907, p. 1814.
149. JE, t. 7, p. 505–509; *I. M. Troilsky*, Samodeiatelnost i samopomosch evreiev v Rossii (autonomous activity and mutual assistance of Jews in Russia), BJWR-1, pp. 491–495.
150. JE, t. 16, p. 265.
151. SJE, t. 7, p. 366.
152. JE, t. 2, pp. 246–248.
153. *Ibidem*, pp. 247–248.
154. SJE, t. 7, p. 365.
155. *V. Jabotinsky*, Vvedenie (Preface to K. N. Bialik, Pesni i poemy (Songs and poems), Saint Petersburg, ed. Zaltsman, 1914, p. 36
156. *I. Mark*, Literatoura na idish v Rossii (Literature in Yiddish in Russia), BJWR-1, pp. 537–539.
157. *Aronson*, *op. cit.*, BJWR-1, p. 216.
158. *Mark*, LJE-1, pp. 519–541.
159. *G. I. Aronson*, Roussko-evreiskaïa pclchat (The Russian-Jewish Press), BJWR-1, p. 563.
160. *Sliosberg*, t. 1, pp. 105, 260.
161. *Aronson*, The Russian-Jewish Press, *op. cit.*, pp. 563–568.
162. *S. M. Ginzburg*, O roussko-evrciskoï intelligentsii (De l'intelligentsia russo-juive), JW-1. pp. 35–36.
163. *I. Ben-Tvi*, Iz istorii rabotchego sionizma v Rossii (About the History of Workers' Zionism in Russia). BJWR-1, p. 272.
164. *Ginzburg*, About Russian-Jewish Intelligentsia, *op. cit.*, pp. 37–39
165. *Sliosberg*, t. 2, pp. 301–302.
166. *Hessen*, t. 2, p. 232.
167. JE, t. 3, p. 232.
168. *I. Mark*, Pamiati I. M. Tcherkover (To the Memory of I. M. Tcherkover), JW-2, New York, 1944, p. 425.
169. *Aronson*, The Russian-Jewish Press, *op. cit.*, pp. 564–568.
170. *Sliosberg*, L 3, pp. 110–135.
171. *Aronson*, The Russian-Jewish Press, *op. cit.*, pp. 213–215.
172. *Parks*, p. 161.
173. Istoria XIX veka v 8-mi t. (Russian translation of the History of the XIX century in 8 volumes, by Lavisse and Rambaud, t. 7), M., 139, pp. 186, 203.
174. *Parks*, p. 164.

- Karl Eugen Dühring (1833–1921): German philosopher. His theses, opposed to the economic and social theories of Marx and Engels, were strongly criticised by the latter in the work entitled precisely the Anti-Dühring.

175. JE*, t. 2, pp. 696–708.
176. *Ibidem*, pp. 676–677.
177. *R. Noudelman*, Prizrak brodit po Evrope (A Spectre Haunts Europe), in «22», Tel-Aviv, 1992, no. 84, p. 128.
178. JE, t. 11, p. 758–759.
179. *V. S. Solovyov*, Evreistvo i khristianski vopros (Judaism and the Christian Question), Compl. Works in 10 vols., 2nd ed., St. Petersburg, 1911–1914, vol. 4, pp. 135, 136, 138.
180. *Aronson*, The Russian-Jewish Press, *op. cit.*, p. 549.
181. Letter from V. Solovyov to F. Hetz, in V. S. Solovyov. Evreiski vopros—Khristianski vopros / Sobranie statei (The Jewish question—The Christian question—Collection of articles), Warsaw, Pravda, 1906. p. 34.
182. Neopoublikovannyi protest protiv antisemitizma (Protest against anti-Semitism, unpublished [edited by Vladimir Solovyov]), BJWR-1, pp. 574–575. The text of this protest was originally published in the book by F. Hetz, Ob otnoshenii V. Solovyova k evreiskomou voprosou (V. Solovyov's attitude towards the Jewish question) (M., 1920), where it figures under the title "Ob antisemititcheskom dvijenii v petchati: Neizdannaïa statia V. Solovyova" (On the anti-Semitic movement in the press: an unpublished article by V. Solovyov), then it was reprinted in the "free" brochure of Warsaw quoted above.

- Vladimir Galaktionovich Korolenko (1853–1921) famous Russian writer, great democrat. A political exile, he spent ten years in Eastern Siberia. Denounces police violence and anti-Semitism. Will be horrified by the terror and despotism of the Bolsheviks.

183. *Cf.* BJWR-1*, p. 565.
184. *Teitel*, p. 176.
185. JE, t. 10, p. 827.

186. *S. M. Schwartz*, Antisemitizm v Sovetskom Soiouze (Anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union), New York, ed. Chekhov, 1952, p. 13.

- Nikolai Mikhailovich Karamzin (1766–1826): Russian writer. His great History of the Russian State made Pushkin say of him that he was the "Christopher Columbus of Ancient Russia."
    - The False-Dmitry, said the Usurper: in 1601, this character appeared in Poland pretending to be the son of Ivan IV. He marched on Moscow and occupied the throne from 1905 to 1906. He was killed by conspirator boyars.

187. N. M. Karamzin, Istoria Gosudarsva Rossiiskogo (History of the Russian State), 12 vols., 5 ed., Saint Petersburg, Einerling, 1842–1844, t. 11, p. 143.
188. *Dahl*, Toljovyi slovar jivogo velokorousskogo iazyka (Dictionary of the living Great-Russian language), t. 1, 1955, p. 541.
189. *I. E. Temirov*, Vospominania (Souvenirs), BFRZ, f. 1, A-29, p. 23.
190. SJE, t. 4, p. 327.
191. *L. Praisman*, Pogromy i samooborona (Pogroms and self-defense), in "22", 1986–1987, no. 51, p. 176.
192. JE, t. 9, p. 507.
193. Kichinevski pogrom: Obvinitelnyi akt (The Kichinev pogrom: the indictment), Osvobojdenie, Stuttgart, Oct. 19, 1903, no. 9 (33), supplement, pp. 1–4.
194. *I. G. Froumkine*, Iz istorii rousskogo evrcistva: vospominaniia, materialy, dokoumenty (On the history of the Jews of Russia: memoires, materials, documents), BJWR-1, p. 59.
195. Kichinevski pogrom: Obvinitelnyi akt (The Kichinev pogrom: the indictment), Osvobojdenie, *op. cit.*, p. 1.
196. Materialy dlia istorii antievreiskikh pogromov v Rossii (Materials for history 12 vols., 5th ed., Saint Petersburg, Einerling, 1842–1844, 11, pp. 143, S. M. Dubnov and G. I. Krasnyi-Admoni, t. 1, Pg. 1919 (Materials…), p. 340.
197. *Froumkine*, BJWR-1, p. 59.
198. *Biekerman*, RJE, p. 57.
199. SJE, t. 4, p. 327.
200. *V. G. Korolenko*, Dom no 13, Sobr. sotch. (Complete works), t. 9, M. 1995, pp. 406–422.
201. The Kichinev pogrom: The indictment, *op. cit.*, pp. 3, 202.
202. *Krohl*, Stranitsy… (Pages…), p. 299.
203. *Sliosberg*, t. 3, p. 49.
204. *M. Krohl*, Kishinevski pogrom 1903 goda i Kishinevski pogromnyi protses (The Kichinev pogrom of 1903 and the trial of the Kichinev pogrom), Mi-2, p. 372.
205. *Ibidem*, pp. 372–373.
206. *Krohl*, Stranitsy… (Pages…), *op. cit.*, pp. 301, 303.
207. *Ibidem*, pp. 301–304.
208. *Krohl*, *op. cit.*, Mi-2, p. 374.
209. *Ibidem.*
210. Report to the Prosecutor No. 1392 of 20 Nov. 1903; Report to the prosecutor No. 1437 of 1 Dec. 1903, in Materialy… [Materials…], *op. cit.*, pp. 319, 322–323.
211. RJE, t. 1, p. 417.
212. In Materialy… [Materials…], *op. cit.*, pp. 333–335; Pravitelstvennyi vestnik (Government Messenger). Saint Petersburg, no. 97, 1903, 29 April (12 May).
213. *J. de Cronstadt*: My thoughts about the violence perpetrated by Christians against the Jews in Kishinev, in Materialy… [Materials…], *op. cit.*, pp. 354, 356.
214. Homily of Bishop Antoine of 30 April 1903, in Materialy… [Materials…], *op. cit.*, pp. 354, 356.
215. Sankt-Petersburgskie vedomosti (News from Saint Petersburg), 24 April (7 May 1903), p. 5.
216. Baltimore Sun, 16 May 1903, p. 2; The Jewish Chronicle, 15 May 1903, p. 2; Protest by the Board of Deputies and the Anglo-Jewish Association, Times, 18 May 1903, p. 10.
217. In Materialy… [Materials…], *op. cit.*, pp. 174–175.
218. *Ibidem*, p. 279.
219. *Ibidem*, pp. 172–173.
220. *Krohl*, *op. cit.*, RW-2, pp. 376–377.
221. *Krohl*, Stranitsy… (Pages…), *op. cit.*, p. 302.
222. *Krohl*, *op. cit.*, RW-2, pp. 371–372.
223. "Remember Kichineff" (editorial), The Jewish Chronicle, 15 May 1903, p. 21; 22 May 1903, p. 10; Baltimore Sun, 16 May 1903, p. 4.
224. *Sliosberg*, vol. 3, pp. 48–49, 61–64.
225. *Ibidem.*
226. Times, 18 May 1903, p. 10.
227. "Protest by the Board of Deputies and the Anglo-Jewish Association", Times, 18 May 1903, p. 10.

228. New York Times, 19 May 1903, p. 10; 21 May 1903, p. 8.
229. Times, 27 May 1903, p. 7.
230. *P. P. Zavarsine*, Rabota taino politsii (The Work of Your Secret Police), Paris, 1924, pp. 68–69.
231. November sechzehn, München-Zürich, Piper, 1986, p. 1149. French Trans., ed. Fayard, Paris, 1985.
232. SJE, t. 7, p. 347.
233. *Ibidem*, t. 6, p. 533.
234. *D. S. Pasmanik*, Rousskaïa revolioutisiia i evreistvo (Bolchevisme i ioudaïsme) (The Russian Revolution and Judaism [The Bolshevism and Judaism]), Paris, 1923, p. 142.
235. *Krohl*, Stranitsy… (Pages…) *op. cit.*, p. 303.
236. *Krohl*, *op. cit.*, JW2*, pp. 379–380.
237. *Sliosberg*, t. 3, p. 69.
238. Times, 10 November 1903, p. 4.
239. JE, t. 9, p. 507.
240. Materialy… (Materials…), *op. cit.*, p. 147; Times, 18 May 1903, p. 8; Materialy…, *op. cit.*, p. 294.
241. The American Jewish Year Book, 5664 (1903–1904), Philadelphia, 1903, p. 22.
242. *Froumkine*, BJWR-1, pp. 60–61.

Chapter 9

During the Revolution of 1905

The Kishinev pogrom produced a devastating and indelible effect on the Jewish community in Russia. Jabotinsky: Kishinev traces "the boundary between two epochs, two psychologies." The Jews of Russia have not only experienced deep sorrow, but, more profoundly so, "something which had almost made one forget the pain—and that was shame."[1] "If the carnage of Kishinev played a major role in the realisation of our situation, it was because we then realised that the Jews were cowards."[2]

We have already mentioned the failure of the police and the awkwardness of the authorities—it was therefore natural that the Jews had asked themselves the question: should we continue to rely on the protection of public authorities? Why not create our own armed militias and defend ourselves weapons in hand? They were incited by a group of prominent public men and writers—Doubnov, Ahad Haam, Rovnitsky, Ben-Ami, Bialik: "Brothers… cease weeping and begging for mercy. Do not expect any help from your enemies. Only rely on your own arms!"[3]

These calls "produced on Jewish youth the effect of an electric shock."[4] And in the overheated atmosphere that began to reign after the Kishinev pogrom, "armed groups of self-defence" quickly saw the light at various locations in the Pale of Settlement. They were generally financed "by the Jewish community"[5], and the illegal introduction of weapons from abroad did not pose a problem for the Jews. It was not unusual for these weapons to fall into the hands of very young people.

Official reports do not indicate the existence of armed groups among the Christian population. The government struggled as best it could against the bombs of terrorists. When armed militias began to develop, it saw in them—it is only natural—totally illegal demonstrations, the premises of the civil war, and it banned them by the means and information it had at its disposal. (Also today, the whole world condemns and prohibits "illegal paramilitary formations.")

A highly operational armed group was formed in Gomel under the direction of the local committee of the Bund. On March 1st, 1903, the latter had organised "festivities" for the anniversary of the "execution of Alexander II."[6] In this city, where Christians and Jews were nearly equal in number[7], and the socialist Jews were more than determined, the establishment of armed groups of self-defence was particularly strong. This was to be noted during the events of August 29th and September 1st 1903—the Gomel pogrom.

According to the findings of the official investigation, the responsibility for the Gomel pogrom is shared: Christians and Jews mutually attacked each other.

Let us take a closer look at the official documents of the time, in this case the indictment of the Gomel affair, based on the police reports drawn up on the spot. (Police reports, which date back to the early twentieth century in Russia, have repeatedly proven their accuracy and their irreproachable precision—and this up to the hustle and bustle of the days of February 1917, up to the moment where the police stations of Petrograd were vested by the insurgents, burnt down—since then, this stream of minutely-recorded information was cut off, and remained so for us.)

At the Gomel trial, the indictment states: "The Jewish population… began to procure weapons and to organise self-defence circles in the event of trouble directed at the Jews… Some residents of Gomel had the opportunity to attend Jewish youth training sessions outside the city and which gathered up to a hundred people practising shooting guns."[8]

"The generalisation of the possession of weapons, on the one hand, the awareness of one's numerical superiority and cohesion, on the other hand, have emboldened the Jewish population to the extent that, among its youth, they spoke not only of self-defence, but of indispensable revenge for the Kishinev pogrom."

Thus hatred expressed in one place is reflected in another, distant—and against the innocent.

"For some time past, the attitude of the Jews of Gomel has become not only contemptuous, but frankly provocative; the attacks—both verbal and physical—on peasants and workers have become commonplace, and the Jews display their contempt in all sorts of ways even against the Russians belonging to higher social strata, for example, by forcing soldiers to change sidewalk." On August 29th, 1903, everything started with a banal incident in a market: an altercation between the herring merchant Malitskaya and her client Chalykov; she spat in his face, the dispute turned into a brawl, "immediately several Jews rushed upon Chalykov, threw him to the ground, and began to strike him with everything they could put their hands on. A dozen peasants wanted to defend Chalykov, but the Jews immediately emitted whistles previously agreed upon, causing a considerable influx of other Jews… No doubt these whistles were a call for help… thus they immediately mobilised the entire Jewish population of the city"; "on foot, by car, armed as they could, the Jews flocked to the market everywhere. Very soon, the Street of the Market, the market itself and all the adjacent streets were swarming with people; The Jews were armed with stones, sticks, hammers, specially-made clubs or even simply iron bars. Everywhere shouts were heard: 'Let's go, Jews! To the market! It is the pogrom of the Russians!' And all this mass went into small groups to pursue the peasants to strike them"—and the latter were numerous, on a market day. "Leaving there their purchases, the peasants—when they had time—jumped on their chariots and hastened to leave the city… Witnesses say that when they caught Russians, the Jews beat them without mercy, they beat old people, women and even children. For example, a little girl was pulled out of a chariot and dragged by her hair on the roadway." "A peasant by the name of Silkov had placed himself at some distance to enjoy the spectacle while nibbling a piece of bread. At that moment, a Jew who ran behind him struck his throat with a mortal knife wound, then disappeared among the crowd." Other episodes are listed. An officer was only saved thanks to the intervention of Rabbi Maiants and the owner of the neighbouring house, Rudzievsky. Upon arriving at the scene, the police were welcomed "on the Jews' side, by a hail of stones and by revolver shots… which started not only from the crowd but also from the balconies of neighbouring buildings"; "the violence against the Christian population continued almost until the evening, and it was only with the arrival of a detachment from the army that the mobs of Jews were dispersed"; "the Jews struck the Russians, and especially the peasants, who… were incapable of any resistance, either because of their small number compared to that of the Jews or because of their lack of defences… That day, all the victims were Russians… many wounded, people beaten to a pulp."[9] The indictment concludes with regard to the events of August 29th that they "undeniably had the character of an 'anti-Russian pogrom'."[10]

These facts caused "deep indignation among the Christian population", which reinforced "the euphoric mood" of the Jews, their "enthusiasm"…: "We are no longer in Kishinev!" On September 1st, after the midday siren, the railway workers were abnormally noisy as they left the workshops, shouts and exclamations were heard, and the chief of police ordered to block the bridge leading to the city. Then the workers spread to the neighbouring streets and "stones flew to the windows of houses inhabited by Jews," while "in the city were beginning to form large gatherings of Jews" who "threw from a distance pieces of wood and stones onto the crowd of workers"; "two paving stones thrown by the Jewish crowd" struck a police commissioner in the back who fell unconscious. The Russian crowd began to yell: "the kikes have killed the commissary!" and undertook to sack Jewish houses and shops. The intervention of the troop, which separated the adversaries and deployed itself in the face of both, prevented the shedding of blood. On the Jews' side, stones were thrown, and revolver shots were fired at the soldiers "with a shower of insults." The commander asked Rabbi Maiants and Doctor Zalkind to intervene with the Jews, but "their appeals for calm were of no effect and the crowd continued its agitation"; it was only possible to draw it back by pointing the bayonets. The main success of the army was to prevent "the breakers from reaching the city centre, where were found the shops and houses of the wealthy Jews." Then the pogrom moved to the outskirts of the city. The chief of the police still tried to exhort the crowd, but they cried out: "You are with the Jews, you have betrayed us! The salvos drawn by the troops upon the Russians as well as on the Jews curbed the pogrom, but two hours later it resumed in the suburbs—again shootings on the crowd, several dead and wounded, and then the pogrom ceased. However, the indictment refers to the presence in the city centre of "groups of Jews who conducted themselves in a very provocative manner and opposed the army and the police… As on 29 August, all were armed… many brandished revolvers and daggers", "going as far as firing shots or throwing stones on the troops charged to protect their property"; "they attacked the Russians who ventured alone in the streets, including the soldiers": a peasant and a beggar were killed. During that day, three middle-class Jews succumbed to "deadly wounds". Towards the evening the disorders ceased. Five Jews and four Christians had been killed. "Nearly 250 commercial or residential premises belonging to Jews had been affected by the pogrom." On the Jewish side, "the

overwhelming majority of active participants in the events consisted exclusively of… young people," but many "more mature" people, as well as children, had handed them stones, boards, and logs."[11]

No description of these events can be found by any Jewish writer.

"The Gomel pogrom had not taken its organisers off guard. It had been prepared for a long time, the formation of self-defence had been put in place soon after the events of Kishinev."[12] Only a few months after Kishinev, the Jews could no longer despise themselves for the resigned attitude with which they were accused of, among others, by the poet Bialik. And, as always happens with armed groups of this type, the boundary between defence and attack became blurred. The first was fed by the Kishinev pogrom, the second of the revolutionary spirit of the organisers.

(Activism of Jewish youth had already manifested itself before. Thus, in 1899, the "Chklov affair" was revealed: in this city where there were nine Jews for a Russian, disarmed Russian soldiers—they were demobilised—were severely beaten by Jews. After examining this episode, the Senate considered it to be a manifestation of ethnic and religious hatred of Jews towards Russians under the same article of the Penal Code as that had been applied to the trial of those responsible for the Kishinev pogrom.)

This activism must not be accounted for solely by the Bund. "At the head of this process [of creating, at a steady pace, organisations of self-defence] are found the Zionists and the parties close to Zionism—the Zionist-Socialists and the 'Poalei Zion'." Thus, it is how in Gomel, in 1903, "the majority of the detachments were organised by the 'Poalei Zion' party."[13] (Which contradicts Buchbinder, fervent admirer of the Bund—I do not really know whom to believe.)

When the news of Gomel's pogrom reached Saint Petersburg, the Jewish Defence Office dispatched two lawyers—still Zaroudny and N. D. Sokolov—to proceed to a private investigation as soon as possible. Zaroudny once again gathered "irrefutable proofs" that the pogrom had been organised by the Department of Security,[14] but here also, they were not made public. (Thirty years later, even Sliosberg, who participated in the trials of Gomel, followed suit in his Memoirs in three volumes, asserting, without any shred of evidence—which seems incomprehensible on the part of a lawyer—, mistaking the dates—and those errors that can be attributed to age, he found no one to correct them—, that the Gomel pogrom had been deliberately organised by the police. He excludes also all offensive action on the part of the self-defence detachments of the Bund and of the Poalei Zion. (He speaks of it incoherently and confusedly, for example: "The young people of the self-defence groups quickly put an end to the misbehaviour and drove out the peasants", "the young Jews gathered promptly and, on more than one occasion, they were able to repel the rioters,"[15] just like that, without using any weapons? …)

The official investigation was proceeding seriously, step by step—and during that time Russia was plunging into the Japanese war. And it was not until October 1904 that Gomel's trial took place—in a white-hot political atmosphere.

Forty-four Christians and 36 Jews appeared before the court; Nearly a thousand people were called to the witness stand.[16] The Defence Office was represented by several lawyers: Sliosberg, Kupernik, Mandelstam, Kalmanovich, Ratner, Krohl. From their point of view, it was unjust that even a single Jew should be included in the bench of the accused: for the entire Jewish community in Russia "it was like a warning against recourse to self-defence."[17] From the government's point of view, this was not "self-defence". But the lawyers of the Jewish defendants did not deal with the details, nor the Jewish property that had really been sacked—they focused only on one thing: to uncover the "political motives" of the pogrom, for example, to point out that Jewish youth, in the midst of the fray, was shouting: "Down with the autocracy!" In fact, shortly afterwards, they decided to abandon their clients and leave the courtroom collectively in order to send an even stronger message: to repeat the precedent of the Kishinev trial.[18]

This method, as skilful as it was revolutionary, was entirely in the air of the time in December 1904: these liberal advocates wanted to explode the judicial system itself!

After their departure, "the trial quickly came to an end" insofar as it was now possible to examine the facts. Some of the Jews were acquitted, the others were sentenced to penalties not exceeding five months; "The condemnations which befell the Christians were equal to those of the Jews."[19] In the end, there were about as many convictions on one

side as on the other.[20]

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By plunging into the Japanese war, by adopting a rigid and insightful stance in the conflict over Korea, neither the Emperor Nicholas II nor the high dignitaries around him realised how much, on the international plane, Russia was vulnerable to the west and especially to the "traditionally friendly" America. Nor did they take into account the rise of Western financiers, who were already influencing the policy of the great powers, increasingly dependent on credit. In the nineteenth century things did not happen this way yet, and the Russian government, always slow to react, did not know how to perceive these changes.

However, after the Kishinev pogrom, Western opinion had become firmly established in an attitude of repulsion towards Russia, considered as an old scarecrow, an Asiatic and despotic country where obscurantism reigns, where the people are exploited, where the revolutionaries are treated without pity, subjected to inhuman sufferings and deprivations, and now they are massacring the Jews "by the thousands", and behind all this there is the hand of the government! (As we have seen, the government was unable to rectify this distorted version of the facts in time, with energy and efficiency.) So, in the West, people began to consider it appropriate, even worthy of consideration, to hope that the revolution would break out in Russia as soon as possible: it would be a good thing for the whole world—and for the Jews of Russia in particular.

And, above all, the incompetence, the incapacity, the unpreparedness to conduct far-off military operations against a country that at that time seemed small and weak, in the context of an agitated, openly hostile public opinion, that longed for the defeat of its own country.

The sympathy of the United States for Japan expressed itself abundantly in the American press. It "hailed every Japanese victory and did not hide its desire to see Russia undergo a rapid and decisive setback."[21] Witte mentions twice in his Memoirs that President Theodore Roosevelt was on the side of Japan and supported it.[22] And Roosevelt himself: "As soon as this war broke out I brought to Germany's and France's attention, with the utmost courtesy and discretion, that in case of an anti-Japanese agreement" with Russia "I would immediately take the side of Japan and would do everything in the future to serve its interests."[23] It may be supposed that Roosevelt's intentions were not unknown to Japan.

And it was there that the very powerful banker Jakob Schiff appeared—one of the greatest of the Jews, he who could realise his ideals thanks to his exceptional position in the economic sphere."[24] "From his earliest years Schiff took care of business affairs"; he emigrated from Germany to New York and soon became head of the Bank Kuhn, Loeb & Co. In 1912, "he is in America the king of rail, owner of twenty-two thousand miles of railroads"; "he also has a reputation as an energetic and generous philanthropist; he is particularly sensitive to the needs of the Jewish community."[25] Schiff was particularly keen on the fate of the Russian Jews—hence his hostility towards Russia until 1917. According to the *Encyclopædia Judaica* (in English), "Schiff made a remarkable contribution to the allocation of credits to his own government and to that of other countries, particularly pointing out a loan of 200 million dollars to Japan during the conflict opposing it to Russia in 1904–1905. Outraged by the anti-Semitic policy of the tsarist regime in Russia, he eagerly supported the Japanese war effort. He constantly refused to participate in lending to Russia and used his influence to deter other institutions from doing so, while granting financial aid to the self-defence groups of Russian Jews."[26] But while it is true that this money allowed the Bund and the Poalei Zion to supply themselves with weapons, it is no less likely that they also benefited from other revolutionary organisations in Russia (including the S.-R. who, at the time, practised terrorism). There is evidence that Schiff, in an interview with an official of the Ministry of Finance of Russia, G. A. Vilenkine, who was also one of his distant relatives, "acknowledged that he contributed to the financing of the revolutionary movement in Russia" and that "things had gone too far"[27] to put an end to it.

However, in Russia, Baron G. O. Ginzburg continued to intervene in favour of equal rights for the Jews. To this end, in 1903 he visited Witte at the head of a Jewish delegation. The latter (who had already dealt with the Jewish

question when he was secretary-general of the government) replied to them then: that the Jews should be granted equal rights only gradually, but "in order for the question to be raised, the Jews must adopt 'a completely different behaviour'," that is to say, to refrain from interfering in the political life of the country. "It is not your business, leave it to those who are Russian by blood and civil status, it is not for you to give us lessons, you should rather take care of yourself." Ginzburg, Sliosberg, and Koulicher agreed with this opinion, other participants did not, particularly Winaver, who objected: "The time has come to grant equal rights to all the subjects [of the empire]… The Jews must support with all their strength those of the Russians who fight for it, and thus against the power in place."[28]

From the Japanese war, from the beginning of 1904, the Russian government sought financial support from the West, and in order to obtain it, was willing to promise an extension of the rights of the Jews. At Plehve's request, high personalities came into contact with Baron Ginzburg on this subject, and Sliosberg was sent abroad to survey the opinion of the greatest Jewish financiers. As a matter of principle, Schiff "declined all bargaining over the number and nature of the rights granted to the Jews." He could "enter into financial relations only with a government that recognises to all its citizens the equality of civic and political rights… 'One can only maintain financial relations with civilized countries'." In Paris, Baron de Rothschild also refused: "I am not prepared to mount any financial operation whatsoever, even if the Russian government brings improvements to the fate of the Jews."[29]

Witte succeeded in obtaining a large loan without the help of Jewish financial circles. Meanwhile, in 1903–1904, the Russian government had undertaken to lift certain provisions limiting the rights of the Jews (we have already mentioned them in part). The first step in this direction, and the most important, had been, during Plehve's lifetime, and by way of derogation of the 1882 Regulations, the lifting of the prohibition on Jews settling in 101 densely populated localities which were not considered cities despite significant industrial and commercial activity, particularly in the grain trade.[30] Secondly, the decision to promote a group of Jews to the rank of avowed attorneys, which had not been done since 1889.[31] After the assassination of Plehve and the era of "confidence" inaugurated by the short-lived minister of the Interior Sviatopolk-Mirsky, this process continued. Thus, for Jews with higher education, the lifting of restrictive measures taken in 1882 took place, including the right to settle in areas previously prohibited to them, such as those of the Army of the Don, of Kuban, of Terek. The ban on residence in the border strip of 50 versts was also lifted; they re-established the right (abolished under Alexander II after 1874) to reside throughout the whole territory of the empire for "the brass of the army of Jewish origin… with exemplary service records."[32] On the occasion of the birth of the heir to the throne, in 1904, amnesty was decreed on the fines, which had befallen the Jews who had evaded their military obligations.

But all these concessions came too late. In the node of the Japanese war that surrounded Russia, they were henceforth not accepted, as we have seen, neither by Western Jewish financiers, nor by the majority of Jewish politicians in Russia, nor, with strong reason, by Jewish youth. And in response to statements made by Sviatopolk-Mirsky when he took office—promising relief in both the Pale of Settlement and the choice of an activity—a declaration of "more than six thousand people" (The signatures had been collected by the Jewish Democratic Group): "We consider all efforts to satisfy and appease the Jewish population by partial improvements in their condition as futile. We consider as null and void any policy of gradually lifting the prohibitions weighing on us… We are waiting for equal rights… we make of it a matter of honour and justice."[33]

It had become easier to weigh on a government entangled in war.

It goes without saying that, in a context in which cultivated Russian society had only contempt for power, it was difficult to expect Jewish youth to manifest massively its patriotic enthusiasm. According to the data provided by General Kushropkin, then Minister of War, then commander-in-chief of the eastern front, "in 1904 the number of insubordinates among the Jewish conscripts doubled compared with the year 1903; more than 20,000 of them have evaded their military obligations without good cause. Out of 1,000 conscripts, more than 300 were missing, while among the Russian conscripts this number fell to only 2 per 1,000. As for the Jewish reservists, they deserted en masse on the way to the area of military operations."[34]

An American statistic suggests indirectly that from the beginning of the Japanese war there was a wave of mass emigration of Jews of military service age. During the two years of war, the figures for Jewish immigration to the

United States increased very sharply for people of working age (14–44 years) and men: the former were 29,000 more than what they were expected, (compared to other immigrant categories); the second, 28,000 more (compared to women). After the war, the usual proportions were found.[35] (*The Kievian* newspaper reported at the time that "from 20,000 to 30,000 Jewish soldiers and reservists… have gone into hiding or fled abroad."[36] In the article "Military service in Russia" of the *Jewish Encyclopædia*, we can see a comparative picture of insubordination among Jews and Christians, according to official figures, the proportion of the former compared with the latter is 30 to one in 1902 and 34 to one in 1903. The *Jewish Encyclopædia* indicates that these figures can also be explained by emigration, deaths not taken into account, or miscalculations, but the inexplicable absence in this table of statistical data for 1904 and 1905, leaves no possibility of obtaining a precise idea of the extent of the insubordination during the war.[37]

As for the Jewish fighters, the *Jewish Encyclopædia* says that there were between 20,000 and 30,000 during the war, not to mention the 3,000 Jews serving as doctors; and it points out that even the newspaper *Novoïe Vremia*, although hostile to the Jews, recognised their courageous behaviour in combat.[38] These statements are corroborated by the testimony of General Denikin "In the Russian army, the Jewish soldiers, resourceful and conscientious, adapted well, even in times of peace. But in times of war all differences were self-effacing, and individual courage and intelligence were also recognised."[39] A historical fact: the heroism of Iossif Troumpeldor who, having lost a hand, asked to remain in the ranks. In fact, he was not the only one to distinguish himself.[40]

At the end of this war lost by Russia, President Theodore Roosevelt agreed to mediate the talks with Japan (Portsmouth, USA). Witte, who led the Russian delegation, evokes "this delegation of Jewish big shots who came to see me twice in America to talk to me about the Jewish question." These were Jakob Schiff, the eminent lawyer Louis Marshall and Oscar Strauss, among others. The position of Russia had become rather uncomfortable, which imposed a more conciliatory tone on the Russian minister than in 1903. Witte's arguments "raised violent objections on the part of Schiff."[41] Fifteen years later, Kraus, one of the members of this delegation, who in 1920 became president of the B'nai B'rith Lodge, said: "If the tsar does not give his people the freedoms to which it is entitled, the revolution will be able to establish a republic that will allow access to these freedoms."[42]

During the same weeks, a new danger began to undermine Russian-American relations. On his way back to Witte, T. Roosevelt asked him to inform the Emperor that the trade agreement which had long bound (1832) his country to Russia would suffer if it applied confessional restrictions to American businessmen going to its territory.[43] This protest, which, of course, was a matter of principle, concerned, in practice, a significant number of Russian Jews who had immigrated to the United States and had become American citizens. They returned to Russia—often to engage in revolutionary activities—henceforth as merchants who were not subject to any professional or geographical limitation. This landmine could only explode a few years later.

For several years Stuttgart had published the *Osvoboj-denie*[*] magazine, and the great mass of cultivated Russians scarcely concealed its sympathies for the illegal organisation Union for Liberation. In the autumn of 1904, a "banqueting campaign" was held in all the major cities of Russia, where impassioned and premonitory toasts were called for the overthrow of the "regime". Participants from abroad also spoke in public (such as Tan Bogoraz).

"Political unrest had penetrated all layers of the Jewish community." The latter was engulfed in this bubbling, without distinction of classes or parties. Thus "many Jewish public men, even of patriotic sensibility, were part of the Union for Liberation."[44] Like all Russian liberals, they proved to be "defeatists" during the Japanese war. Like them, they applauded the "executions" of the ministers Bogolepov, Sipiagin, Plehve. And this entire "progressive" Russia pushed even the Jews in this direction, unable to admit that a Jew could be more on the right than a left-wing democrat, but feeling that he should, more naturally yet, be a socialist. A Conservative Jew? Ugh! Even in an academic institution such as the Jewish Historical-Ethnographic Commission, "in these tumultuous years there was no time to serenely engage in scientific research…" it was necessary "to make History".[45] "The radical and revolutionary movements within the Russian Jewish community have always been based on the idea that the problem of equal rights… the fundamental historical question of the Jews of Russia, would be solved only when one would cut once for all the head of the Medusa and all the serpents that spring from it."[46]

During these years in Saint Petersburg, the Jewish Defence Office developed its activities with the aim of "fighting anti-Semitic literature and disseminating appropriate information on the legal situation of Jews in order to influence mainly the opinion of liberal Russian circles." (Sliosberg points out that these activities were largely subsidised by the international EKO[*].[47]) But it was not so much Russian society that it was a question of influencing. The Bureau did not open branches in Russia, not even in Moscow, Kiev, or Odessa: on the one hand, Zionist propaganda absorbed all the energy of the most cultivated Jews; on the other, "Bund propaganda mobilised the greater part of the educated Jewish youth." (Sliosberg insisting that the Bund be condemned, Winaver objected that he should not quarrel with the Bund: "it disposes of energy and propaganda power."[48] However, the Bureau soon maintained a strong relationship, built on reciprocal information and mutual aid, with the American Jewish Committee (chaired by J. Schiff, then Louis Marshall), the English Jewish Committee (Claude Montefiore, Lucine Woolf), the Alliance in Paris and the Support Committee of the German Jews (*Hilfsverein der deutschen Juden*: James Simon, Paul Nathan[49]).

Here is the testimony of M. Krohl: "The heart of our group was the 'Press Office'[whose mission was to disseminate] through the Russian and foreign press serious information about the situation of the Jews in Russia." It was A. I. Braudo who undertook this task. "He accomplished it perfectly. Under the conditions of the Russia of that time, this kind of work required a great deal of prudence," was to be carried out "in the greatest secrecy. Even the members of the Defence Office did not know by what means or by what channels he had succeeded in organising such and such a press campaign… A large number of articles published in the Russian or foreign press of the time, often with great repercussions, had been communicated to the newspapers or magazines either personally by Braudo, or through his intermediary."[50]

"Providing serious information" to launch "this or that press campaign"—it is a bit chilling, especially in light of what happened in the 20th century. In today's language, it is called "skilful manipulation of the media."

In March 1905 the Defence Bureau convened in Vilnius the Constituent Congress of the "Union for the Equal Rights for the Jewish People in Russia,"[51] but it quickly proceeded to its self-dissolution and joined the direction of the Union for the integrality of rights (the expression "integrality", because it was stronger than that of "equal rights", had been proposed by Winaver. Today, we evoke it under a hybrid form such as the "Union for Achieving Integral Equality of Rights"[52]).

It was wanted that this new Union bring together all Jewish parties and groups.[53] But the Bund denounced this congress as a *bourgeois*. However, many Zionists could not remain in their splendid isolation. The prodromes of the Russian revolution led to a split in their ranks. And some of these fractions did not resist the temptation to participate in the great things that unfolded before their eyes! But in so doing, they exerted an influence on the strictly civic orientation of the congress agenda. The idea was making its way not only to fight for civic rights but also, with the same energy, for national rights.[54]

Sliosberg fought against the influence of the Zionists "who wanted to withdraw the Jews from the number of citizens of Russia" and whose demands "were often formulated only for demagogic reasons." For the Jewish community in Russia "has in no way been limited in the expression of its national life… Was it appropriate to raise the question of national autonomy of the Jews when none of the nationalities living in Russia possessed it, whereas the Russian people themselves, in their orthodox part, were far from being free in the expression of their religious and national life?" But, "at that time, demagogy assumed a very special significance in the Jewish backstreet."[55]

Thus, in place of the notion, clear in the eyes of everyone, of "equality of rights", which certainly had not yet happened, but seemed no longer to lag behind political developments, the slogan was issued for *the integrality of rights* of the Jews. What was meant by this was that, in addition to equal rights, "national autonomy" was also recognised. "It must be said that those who formulated these requirements did not have a very clear idea of their content. The creation of Jewish schools was not limited by any law. The study of the Russian language was required… insofar as it was not a question of *Heders*.[*] But other more civilised countries also imposed the use of the State language in relations with the administration as well as in school.[56] Thus, there was no "national autonomy" for the Jews in the United States. But the "obtentionists" ("Union for the obtention…") demanded "national and cultural self-determination" on the territory of

Russia, as well as a substantial autonomy for the Jewish communities (and, in the same breath: the secularisation of these, to tear them away from the religious influence of Judaism—which suited both the Zionists and the Socialists). Later, this was called "national-personal autonomy". (Accompanied by the requirement that the Jewish cultural and social institutions be financed by the State but without it interfering in their functioning.) And how can we imagine the "self-management" of a nation scattered territorially? The Second Congress of the Union, in November 1905, took the decision to convene a Jewish National Assembly of Russia.[57]

All these ideas, including the "national-personal autonomy" of the Jews of Russia, were expressed and continued in various forms until 1917. However, the Union for the Integrality of Rights proved ephemeral. At the end of 1906, the Jewish People's Anti-Zionist Group seceded (Winaver, Sliosberg, Koulicher, Sternberg) on the grounds that it refused the idea of a Jewish National Assembly; shortly afterwards it was the turn of the Jewish People's Party (S. Doubnov—religious and cultural nationalism, notably the right to use the Jewish language in public life throughout the country, but with what means, how?); then the Jewish Democratic Group (Bramson, Landau), close to the Labour Party.[58] The Union for the integrality of rights was also accused of having rallied to the KD and, consequently, was "no longer being able to represent the Jewish population of Russia"; the Zionists regarded the "secularists" as "partisans of assimilation", and the socialists as *bourgeois*.[59] In short, at the beginning of 1907, the Union ceased to exist.[60]

The Zionists were increasingly drawn into the revolutionary whirlpool, and in November 1906, at their All-Russian Congress in Helsinfors, it was declared "indispensable not only to turn to the daily needs and demands of the Jews of Russia, but also to engage fully in their political and social struggle"[61]; Jabotinsky insisted that the Zionist program should include the requirement of the establishment in Russia of the sovereignty of the people; D. Pasmanik objected that "such a demand can only be made by those who are ready to stand on the barricades."[62] At the end of its work, the Congress brought its "sanction to the rallying of the Zionists to the Liberation Movement".[63] But the latter was just about to lose momentum after the failure of Vyborg's manifesto.[*]

The author of this program, Jabotinsky, put forward the following arguments: the goal set by Zionism can only be reached in several decades, but by fighting for their full rights, Jews will understand better what Zionism is.[64] However, he said: "We leave the first ranks to the representatives of the majority nation. We cannot pretend to play a *leading* role: we are *aligning* ourselves.[65] In other words: Palestine is one thing; in the meantime, let us fight in Russia. Three years earlier, Plehve had told Herzl that he feared precisely this kind of drift of Zionism.

Sliosberg is far from minimising the role of the Zionists: "After the Congress of Helsinfors, they decided to take control of all public activities of the Jews" by trying to "impose their influence at the local level". (In the first Duma, of the 12 Jewish deputies, five were Zionists.) But he also notes that this profusion of parties was "the business of small circles of intellectuals", not of the Jewish masses, and their propaganda "only caused to confuse the issues."[66]

True, all this scattering did not contribute to the clarification of the debate: it was no longer very clear what the Russian Jews were fighting, for what rights—equal or integral?—or on which plan—civic or national?

And, let us not forget: "All these groups composed only of intellectuals… did not understand Orthodox Jews, who eventually understood the need to organise to combat the growing anti-religious influence exerting itself on Jewish youth." And it was thus that "was born what was later to develop in 'T'Agoudat Israel'." "This movement was concerned that "Jewish revolutionary elements are recruited among the Jewish youth who have moved away from religion," whereas "the majority of the Jews are religious and, while demanding recognition of their rights and the lifting of the prohibitions against them, remain loyal subjects of the Emperor and are far from any idea of overthrowing the existing regime."[67]

When one studies the history of Russian Jews at the beginning of the twentieth century, there are few references to Orthodox Jews. Sliosberg once said, raising the ire of the Bund: "With the *melameds*[*] behind me, I rely on a greater number of Jews than the Bund leaders, for there are more *melameds* among the Jews than the workers."[68] In fact, the secularisation of Jewish society in no way affected the existence of traditional communities in the Pale of Settlement. For them, all the ancestral questions concerning the organisation of their lives, the religious instruction, the rabbinate,

remained topical. During the temporary lull of 1909, the reform of the traditional Jewish community was discussed with great seriousness at the Kovno Congress. “The work of the Congress proved to be very fruitful, and few Jewish assemblies could have equalled it by the seriousness and wisdom of the resolutions adopted there.”[69]

“Orthodox Judaism has always been in conflict—not always open, but rather latent—with the Jewish intelligentsia. It was clear that in condemning the movement for the liberation of the Jews it hoped to win the government’s favour.”[70] But it was too late: on the eve of the 1905 revolution, we have seen that the autocratic regime had lost control of the country. As for traditional Judaism, it had already lost a whole *generation*—moreover it was not the first—who had gone towards Zionism, secular liberalism, rarely enlightened conservatism, but also, and with the heaviest consequences, towards the revolutionary movement.

*

The new generation of revolutionaries had emerged at the turn of the century. Its leaders, Grigory Gershuni and Mikhail Gotz, had decided to revive the terrorist methods of The Will of the People. “Gershuni took upon himself the heavy responsibility of creating in Russia a new revolutionary party called to succeed with dignity to the Will of the People,” and “thanks to his talents as organiser as well as to those of other revolutionaries entirely devoted to the cause, this party was born at the end of the year 1901.” “At the same time… was also constituted its armed faction. Its creator and its inspirer was none other than the very same Gershuni.”[71] Among the S.-R.[*], the Jews “immediately played a leading role.” Amongst them were “An-ski Rappoport, K. Jitlovsky, Ossip Minor, I. Roubanovitch” and—still him!—Mark Natanson. The armed faction included among its members “Abraham Gotz, Dora Brilliant, L. Zilberberg”, not to mention the famous Azef. It is among the S.-R. That M. Trilisser was also formed—he who later would become famous in the Cheka. “Among the grassroots activists of the S.-R. party, there were also quite a few Jews,” even though, adds Schub, “they never represented a tiny minority.” According to him, it is even “the most Russian” of the revolutionary parties.[72] For security reasons, the seat of the party was transferred abroad (for example, the Bund was absent), in Geneva, at M. Gotz and O. Minor’s place.

As for Gershuni, this indomitable “tiger”, after succeeding in deceiving Zubatov’s[**] vigilance, he began to criss-cross Russia, like B. Savinkov, fomenting terrorist actions and checking their proper execution. It was thus that he was present at the Place Saint-Isaac during the assassination of Sipiagin[***]; he was at Ufa when Governor Bogdanovitch was killed[73]; and at Kharkov when it was Governor Obolensky’s turn; on the Nevsky prospect during the failed attack on Pobedonostsev[****]. The execution was always entrusted to “Christians” such as P. Karpovitch, S. Balmachov, E. Sozonov, etc. (The bombs used for the assassination of Plehve, Grand Duke Sergey Aleksandrovich, and planned attacks on Grand Duke Vladimir Alexandrovich and Interior Ministers Boulygin and Durnovo were made by Maximilian Schweitzer, who in 1905 was himself victim of the machine he was making.[74]) Arrested by chance, Gershuni was condemned to death, reprieved by the Emperor without having asked for it; in 1907 he found an ingenious means of escaping from the prison of Akatuysk, hiding in a cabbage-barrel, and then gained by way of Vladivostok, America and Europe; the Russian government demanded his extradition from Italy, but the European liberal opinion was unanimous in refusing it and Clemenceau also used his influence: he was also, as we know, a “tiger”. Soon after, Gershuni died of a sarcoma in the lung. Among other leading S.-R. terrorists, we must also mention Abraham Gotz, who played an active part in the attacks on Dournovo, Akimov, Shuvalov, Trepov[*], and played a role in the assassination of Mine and Rieman. (But, he had the misfortune of living much longer than his elder brother, who died prematurely—and the Bolsheviks later gave him a hard time.)

To play with History, precautions were less taken than the previous revolutionary generation. Less well known than others, Pinhas (Pyotr) Rutenberg is not less worthy of interest. In 1905 he trained groups of fighters in Saint Petersburg and supplied them with weapons. Inspired by Gapon[**], he was at his side on 9 January 1905; But it was also he who, in 1906, “by order of the S.-R. party, organises and supervises his assassination” (later he will author a book entitled *Gapon’s Assassination*[75]). In 1919, he immigrated to Palestine where he distinguished himself in the electrification of the country. There, he shows that he is capable of building; but in his early years, in Russia, he

certainly does not work as an engineer, he destroys! One loses the trace of the "student of Zion", irresponsible instigator of the mutiny of Sveaborg, who, however, escaped the slaughter that ensued.

Apart from the S.-R., each year brought with it new social-democratic fighters, theorists, and talkers. Some had short-lived notoriety in narrow circles, such as Alekandra Sokolovskaya, whom History retained only because she was Trotsky's first wife and the mother of his two daughters. Others have been unjustly forgotten: Zinovy Litvine-Sedoi, the chief of staff of the detachments of the Krasnaya Presnia district during the armed insurrection in Moscow; Zinovy Dosser, a member of the "troika" who led this insurrection. Among its leaders, we can cite again "Marat"—V. L. Chanzer, Lev Kafenhausen, Lubotsky-Zagorsky (who for nearly a century gave his pseudonym*** to the monastery of The Trinity Saint Sergius) and Martin Mandelstam-Liadov, member of the executive Commission of the RSDLP**** for the organisation of the armed insurrection.[76] Others—like F. Dan or O. Nakhamkis—were to play an important role later in 1917.

Despite Bakunin's aversion for the Jews, there are many of them among the leaders and theorists of anarchism. But "other Russian anarchists, such as Kropotkin, had no hostility towards the Jews and tried to win them over to their cause."[77] Among these leaders are Yakov Novomirsky, Alexander Gue, Lev Tcherny, V. Gordine.[78] One of them, I. Grossman-Rochin, evokes with the greatest respect the figure of Aron Eline, of Bialystok: "a famous terrorist", but not only "a specialist in gory operations" "never does he fall… into 'systematic activism'."[79] "The least patient among the mass of Jews… are looking for a faster way to achieve socialism. And this recourse, this 'ambulance', they find in anarchism."[80] It is the Jews of Kiev and Southern Russia who have been most attracted to anarchism, and in the documents relating to the Bogrov affair* there is often mention of smaller-scale anarchists, forgotten by history.

We have already observed, but it is worth recalling, that it was not only because of the inequalities of which they were the victims that many Jews were rushing into the revolution. "The participation of the Jews in the revolutionary movement which had gained the whole of Russia is only partly explained by their situation of inequality… The Jews merely shared the general feeling of hostility towards the autocracy.[81] Should we be surprised? Young people from the intelligentsia, both Russian and Jewish, heard in their families, all year long, only "crimes perpetrated by the power", of the "government composed of assassins", and they precipitated the revolutionary action with all the energy of their fury. Bogrov like the others.

In 1905, the Jewish historian S. Doubnov accused all Jewish revolutionaries of "national treason." In his article entitled "Slavery in the Revolution," he wrote: "This entire numerous army of young Jews, who occupy the most prominent positions in the Social Democratic Party and who run for positions of command, has formally cut off all ties with the Jewish community… You build nothing new, you are only the valets of the revolution, or its commissionaires."[82]

But as time passed, the approval of the adults to their revolutionary progeny grew. This phenomenon was intensified among the "fathers" of the new generation and was on the whole more marked among the Jews than among the Russians. Meier Bomach, member of the Duma, declared ten years later (1916): "We do not regret that the Jews participated in the struggle for liberation… They were fighting for your freedom."[83] And six months later, in the conflagration of the new revolution, in March 1917, the celebrated lawyer O. O. Gruzenberg held these passionate but not unfounded remarks before the leaders of the Provisional Government and the Soviet of deputies of workers and soldiers: "We generously offered to the revolution a huge 'percentage' of our people—almost all its flower, almost all its youth… And, when in 1905 the people rose up, countless Jewish fighters came to swell their ranks, carried by an irresistible impulse."[84] Others will say the same thing: "Historical circumstances made the Jewish masses of Russia unable to not participate in the most active way in the revolution."[85] "For the Jews, the solution of the Jewish question in Russia was the triumph of progressive ideas in this country."[86]

The revolutionary effervescence that had seized Russia was undoubtedly stirred up by that which reigned among the Jews.

However, youth alone, trained in intellectual or manual labour, could not make the revolution. One of the top

priorities was to win over to the revolutionary cause, and to lead the industrial workers, and especially those of Saint Petersburg, to battle. However, as noted by the director of the police department at the time, "at the initial stage of its development, the workers' movement… was foreign to political aspirations." And even on the eve of January 9th, "during an extraordinary meeting which they had organised on December 27th, the workers chased a Jew who tried to make political propaganda and distribute leaflets, and three Jewish women who sought to propagate political ideas were apprehended."[87]

In order to train the workers of Saint Petersburg, Gapon's pseudo-religious propaganda took place.

On 9 January, even before the troops opened fire, it was the young Simon Rechtzammer (the son of the director of the Warehouse and Grain Storage Company) who took the lead of the only barricade erected that day (On the fourth street of Saint-Basil's island), with the destruction of the telegraph and telephone lines and the attack on the police station. Moreover, the workers of this quarter were employed two days later "to copiously beat the intellectuals."[88]

We know that the Russian revolutionaries who immigrated to Europe welcomed the news of the shooting of Petersburg with a mixture of indignation and enthusiasm: it's about time!! Now it's going to blow!! As for the propagation of this enthusiasm—and of the insurrection—in the Pale of Settlement, it was the tireless Bund who harnessed itself, whose hymn (An-ski said of it that it was "The *Marseillaise* of the Jewish Workers") included the following words:

> Enough of loving our enemies, we want to hate them!! …
>
> … it is ready the pyre! We will find enough logs
>
> For its holy flames to engulf the planet!![89]

(Let us note in passing that *The International* was translated into Russian by Arkadi Kotz as early as 1912.[90] Several generations were religiously imbued with his words: *Stand up! The damned of the earth!* and *of the past let us make a clean slate*…)

The Bund immediately issued a proclamation ("about two hundred thousand copies"): "The revolution has begun. It burned in the capital, its flames covering the whole country… To arms! Storm the armouries and seize all the weapons… Let all the streets become battlefields!"[91]

According to the *Red Chronicle* of the Soviet regime's beginnings, "the events of 9 January in Saint Petersburg echoed a great deal in the Jewish workers' movement: they were followed by mass demonstrations of the Jewish proletariat throughout the Pale of Settlement. At their head was the Bund. To ensure the massive nature of these demonstrations, detachments of the Bund went to workshops, factories, and even to the workers' homes to call for the cessation of work; they employed force to empty the boilers of their steam, to tear off the transmission belts; they threatened the owners of companies, here and there shots were fired, at Vitebsk one of them received a jet of sulphuric acid. It was not "a spontaneous mass demonstration, but an action carefully prepared and organised." N. Buchbinder regrets, however, that "almost everywhere the strikes were followed only by the Jewish workers… In a whole series of towns the Russian workers put up a strong resistance to the attempts to stop factories and plants." There were week-long strikes in Vilnius, Minsk, Gomel, Riga, of two weeks in Libava. The police had to intervene, naturally, and in several cities the Bund constituted "armed detachments to combat police terror."[92] In Krinki (the province of Grodno), the strikers gunned the police, interrupted telegraphic communications, and for two days all the power was in the hands of the strike committee. "The fact that workers, and among them a majority of Jews, had thus been able to hold power from the beginning of 1905, was very significant of what this revolution was, and gave rise to many hopes." It is no less true that the Bund's important participation in these actions "might lead one to believe that discontent was above all the result of the Jews, while the other nationalities were not that revolutionary."[93]

The strength of the revolutionaries manifested itself through the actions, carried out in broad daylight, of armed detachments of "self-defence" which had been illustrated during the Gomel pogrom and which had since then grown

considerably stronger. “Self-defence was most often in close contact with the armed detachments of political organisations… It can be said that the whole Pale of Settlement was covered by a whole network of armed self-defence groups which played an important military role—only a professional army could face them.”[94]—At the height of the revolution, they were joined by Zionist groups of various tendencies: “the particularly active participation of the Poalei Zion”, as well as “armed detachments of the ZS [Zionist Socialists]”, But also from SERP. So that “in the armed operations that occurred during the revolution, these socialists belonging to different currents of Zionism found themselves at our side,”[95] remembers S. Dimanstein, later a prominent Bolshevik leader.

The Bund was to continue its military operations throughout this changing and uncertain year of 1905. Special mention should be made to the April events in Jitomir. According to the *Jewish Encyclopædia*, it was a pogrom against the Jews, moreover “fomented by the police.”[96] As for Dimanstein, who boasts of having “actively participated in the 1905 revolution on the territory of the so-called Pale of Settlement,” he wrote: “It was not a pogrom, but a fight against the troops of the counter-revolution.”[97] The *Jewish Encyclopædia* indicates that up to twenty Jews were killed[98]; the new one: “almost fifty (according to other sources, about thirty-five).”[99] According to the latter, “disorders began after provocateurs had declared that Jews had fired shots on the portrait of the tsar outside the city.”[100] While *The Messenger of the Government* gives as a fact that, two weeks before the pogrom, “a crowd of nearly three hundred people gathered outside the city… to practice shooting with revolvers… by aiming for the portrait of His Majesty the Emperor.” After this, several brawls broke out between the Jews and the Christians within the city—still according to *The Messenger of the Government*, the aggressors were mostly Jews.[101] According to the new *Jewish Encyclopædia*, on the day of the event, “the Jewish detachments of self-defence heroically resisted the rioters.” From a neighbouring village, a group of young armed Jews came to their rescue, when, on the way, “they were stopped by Ukrainian peasants” at Troyanovo. “They tried to take refuge among the Jewish inhabitants of the village, but these did not let them in” and, a characteristic fact, “indicated to the peasants where two of them had been hiding”; “ten members of the detachment were killed.”[102]

At the time, a particularly effective manœuvre had already been devised: “The funerals of the victims who fell for the revolution constituted one of the most effective means of propaganda capable of inflating the masses”, which had for consequence that “the fighters were aware that their death would be used for the profit of the revolution, that it would arouse a desire for vengeance among the thousands of people who were going to attend their funeral,” and that on these occasions “it was relatively easier to organise manifestations. The liberal circles considered it their duty to ensure that the police did not intervene during a funeral.” Thus “the funeral became one of the components of revolutionary propaganda in 1905.”[103]

In the summer of that year, “the police terror was massive, but there were also many acts of revenge on the part of the workers who threw bombs on patrols of soldiers or Cossacks, murdered policemen, whether officers or not; these cases were far from being isolated”, because it was “a step backwards or forwards for the revolution in the Jewish sector.”[104] Example: the Cossacks killed a Bund militant in Gomel; eight thousand people attend his funeral, revolutionary speeches are given—and the revolution advances, always advances! And when the time came to protest against the convening of the “Boulyguine”[*] consultative Duma, the campaign “moved from the Stock Exchange in the Jewish quarter to the synagogues… where speakers of the Party intervened during the service… under the protection of armed detachments that sealed off the exits… During these assemblies, it was frequent that resolutions prepared in advance were adopted without discussion”—the unfortunate faithfuls come to pray, did they have a choice? Go and talk to these fellows! There is no question of “stopping the revolutionary process at this stage…”[105]

The project of convocation of this consultative Duma, which was not followed up on due to the events of 1905, started from the assumption that they did not possess it for the designation of municipal self-government bodies, it had been originally planned to not grant the Jews the right to vote. But the revolutionary momentum was growing, the Jewish municipal councillors appointed by the provincial authorities resigned demonstratively here and there, and the Duma Elections Act of August 1905 already provided for the granting of voting rights to the Jews. But the revolution continued its course, and public opinion rejected this consultative Duma, which was therefore not united.

The tension remained high throughout this unhappy year 1905; the government was overtaken by the events. In the fall, strikes, notably in the railways, were being prepared everywhere in Russia. And, of course, the Pale of Settlement

was not spared. In the region of the Northwest, during early October, was seen “a rapid rise… of the revolutionary energy of the masses”, “a new campaign of meetings takes place in the synagogues” (always in the same way, with men posted at exits to intimidate the faithful), “we prepare ourselves feverishly for the general strike.” In Vilnius, during a meeting authorised by the governor, “some shot the immense portrait of the Emperor that was there, and some smashed it with chairs”; An hour later, it was on the governor in person that one drew—here it was, the frenzy of 1905! But in Gomel, for example, the Social Democrats could not agree with the Bund and “they acted in disorder”; as for the social revolutionists, they “joined” the Zionist Socialists; and then “bombs are thrown at the Cossacks, who retaliate by shooting and knocking on all those who fall under their hand, without distinction of nationality,”[106]—a very pretty revolutionary outburst! They were rubbing their hands!

It is not surprising that “in many places… we could observe well-to-do and religious Jews actively fighting the revolution. They worked with the police to track down Jewish revolutionaries, to break up demonstrations, strikes, and so on.” Not that it was pleasing to them to find themselves on the side of power. But, not having detached themselves from God, they refused to witness the *destruction* of life. Still less did they accept the revolutionary law: they venerated *their* Law. While in Bialystok and other places the young revolutionaries assimilated the “Union of the Jews” to the “Black Hundreds” because of its religious orientation.[107]

According to Dimanstein, the situation after the general strike in October could be summarised as follows: “The Bund, the ZS and other Jewish workers’ parties called for insurrection,” but “there a certain weariness could be perceived.”[108] Later, like the Bolsheviks, the Bund boycotted early in the 1906[109] the elections to the first Duma, still caressing the hopes of a revolutionary explosion. This expectation having been disappointed, it resigned itself to bring its positions closer to those of the Mensheviks; in 1907, at the fifth Congress of the RSDLP, of the 305 deputies, 55 were members of the Bund. And it even became a “supporter of extreme Yiddishism.”[110]

It is in this amped atmosphere, very uncertain for the power in place, that Witte persuaded Nicholas II to promulgate the Manifesto of 17 October 1905. (More exactly, Witte wanted to publish it in the form of a simple government press release, but it is Nicholas II himself who insisted that the promulgation of the Manifesto, made in the name of the tsar, should assume a solemn character: he thought he would thus touch the hearts of his subjects.) A. D. Obolensky, who drew up the initial draft, reported that among the three main points of the Manifesto there was a special one devoted to the rights and freedoms of the Jews—but Witte (doubtlessly at the pressing request of the Emperor) modified its formulation by addressing in a general way the respect for individuals and the liberty of conscience, expression, and assembly.”[111] The question of the equal rights of the Jews was therefore no longer mentioned. “It was only in the speech published at the same time than the Manifesto… that Witte spoke of the need to “equalise all Russian subjects before the law irrespective of their confession and nationality.”[112]

But: we must make concessions only at the right time and in a position of strength—and this was no longer the case. Liberal and revolutionary opinion laughed at the Manifesto, seeing it only as a capitulation, and rejected it. The Emperor, like Witte, was deeply affected, but also certain representatives of the Jewish intelligentsia: “For what the best of the Russians had been waiting for decades was finally realised… In fact, the Emperor willingly surrendered the autocratic regime and pledged to hand over the legislative power to the representatives of the people… One would have thought that this change would fill everyone with joy”—but the news was welcomed with the same revolutionary intransigence: the struggle continues![113] In the streets, the national flag, the portraits of the Emperor and the coat of arms of the State were torn off.

The account of Witte’s interview with the Petersburg press on 18 October, following the promulgation of the Manifesto, is rich in information. Witte obviously expected manifestations of gratitude and relied on the friendly support of the press to calm the spirits, he even openly solicited it. He obtained only scathing replies, first from the director of the *Stock Exchange News*, S. M. Propper, then from Notovitch, Khodski, Arabajine, and Annensky; all demanded with one voice: proclaim immediately political amnesty! “This requirement is categorical!” General Trepov must be dismissed from his post as governor-general of Saint Petersburg. This is the unanimous decision of the press.” *The unanimous decision of the press!* And to withdraw the Cossacks and the army from the capital: “We shall not publish any more newspapers as long as the troops are there!” The army is the *cause* of the disorder… The security of the city must be entrusted to the “popular militia”! (That is to say, to the detachments of revolutionaries, which meant

creating in Petersburg the conditions for a butchery, as it would soon be in Odessa, or, in the future, to set up in Petersburg the conditions favourable to the future revolution of February.) And Witte implored: “Let me breathe a little!”, “Help me, give me a few weeks!”; he even passed among them, shaking hands with each one.[114] (For his part, he will remember later: Propper’s demands “meant for me that the press had lost its head.”) Despite this, the government had intelligence and courage to refuse the establishment of anarchy and nothing serious happened in the capital.

(In his Memoirs, Witte relates that Propper “had arrived in Russia from abroad, a penniless Jew with no mastery of the Russian language… He had made his mark in the press and had become the head of the *Stock Exchange News*, running through the antechambers of influential figures… When I was Minister of Finance, [Propper] begged for official announcements, various advantages, and eventually obtained from me the title of commercial advisor.” However, at this meeting, he formulated, not without a certain insolence, “demands, even declarations” like this one: “We have no confidence in the government.”[115])

In the course of the same month of October, *The Kievian* published an account of an officer returning to Moscow just at that moment, after a year and a half of captivity in Japan, who was initially moved to tears by the generosity of the Emperor’s Manifesto, which opened up favourable prospects for the country. At the mere sight of this officer in battle dress, the welcome which the Muscovite crowd received from him was expressed in these terms: “Spook! Suck-up! The tsar’s lackey!” During a large meeting in the Theatre Plaza, “the orator called for struggle and destruction”; another speaker began his speech by shouting: “Down with the autocracy!” “His accent betrayed his Jewish origins, but the Russian public listened to him, and no one found anything to reply to him.” Nods of agreement met the insults uttered against the tsar and his family; Cossacks, policemen and soldiers, all without exception—no mercy! And all the Muscovite newspapers called for armed struggle.”[116]

In Petersburg, as is well known, a “Soviet of the Workers’ Deputies” was formed on 13 October, headed by the incomparable Parvus and Trotsky, and with the straw man Khroustalëv-Nossarëv as a bonus. This Soviet aimed for the complete annihilation of the government.

The events of October had even greater and more tragic consequences in Kiev and Odessa: two great pogroms against the Jews, which must now be examined. They were the subject of detailed reports of *Senate committees of inquiry*—these were the most rigorous investigative procedures in Imperial Russia, the Senate representing the highest and most authoritative judicial institution and of the greatest independence.

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It is Senator Tourau who drafted the report on the Kiev pogrom.[117] He writes that the causes of this “are related to the troubles that have won the whole of Russia in recent years”, and he supports this assertion by a detailed description of what preceded it and the course of the facts themselves.

Let us remind that after the events of 9 January in Saint Petersburg, after months of social unrest, after the infamous defeat against Japan, the imperial government found nothing better to do to calm the minds than to proclaim on the 27th of August, the complete administrative autonomy of the higher education institutions and the territory on which they were located. This measure had no other result than to turn up the revolutionary heat.

It is thus, writes Senator Tourau, that “individuals having nothing to do with the scientific activity of these institutions were free to access them,” and they did so “for the purpose of political propaganda.” At the University and Polytechnic of Kiev “a series of meetings were organised by the students, to which participated an external audience,” and they were called “popular meetings”; a more numerous day-to-day public went there: at the end of September, up to “several thousand people.” During these meetings, red flags were displayed, “passionate speeches were given about the deficiencies of the political regime in place, on the necessity of fighting the government”; “funds were raised for the purchase of weapons”, “leaflets were distributed and brochures on revolutionary propaganda were sold.” In mid-October, “the university as well as the Polytechnic Institute had gradually been transformed into arenas for open

and unbridled anti-government propaganda. Revolutionary militants who were, until recently, prosecuted by the authorities for organising clandestine meetings in private places, now felt invulnerable," they "hatched and discussed plans to bring down the existing political system." But even this did not seem sufficient and the revolutionary action began its expansion: by attracting the "pupils of secondary schools", in other words, high school pupils, and by moving the field of revolutionary activity: (A Jewish student takes the floor to denounce the Kishinev pogrom, immediately leaflets are spread out in the room and cries are heard: "Down with the police! Down with the autocracy!"); in some cases at a meeting of the Society of Art and Literature (windows are broken, "we break chairs and staircase ramps to throw them on peacekeepers"). And there was no authority to prevent this: the universities, autonomous, now had *their own law*.

The description of these events, supported by the statements of more than five hundred witnesses, alternates throughout this report with remarks on the Jews who stand out in the background of this revolutionary crowd. "During the years of the Russian revolution of 1905–1907, the revolutionary activity of the Jews increased considerably". No doubt the novelty of the thing made it seem obvious. "The Jewish youth," the report says, "dominated by numbers both at the 9 September meeting at the Polytechnic Institute and during the occupation of the premises of the Arts and Literary Society"; and, also, on 23 September in the University Hall where "up to 5,000 students and persons outside the university were gathered, with more than 500 women among them." On October 3rd, at the Polytechnic Institute, "nearly 5,000 people gathered… with a Jewish majority of women." The preponderant role of the Jews is mentioned again and again: at the meetings of 5–9 October; at the university meeting on 12 October, in which "participated employees of the railway administration, students, individuals of indeterminate professions" as well as "masses of Jews of both sexes"; on 13 October at the university where "nearly 10,000 people from diverse backgrounds gathered" and speeches were delivered by S-R. and Bund militants. (The *Jewish Encyclopædia* confirms the fact that even beyond Kiev, during demonstrations celebrating new freedoms, "most of the protesters in the Pale of Settlement were Jews." However, it calls "lies" the information according to which, in Ekaterinoslav, "they were collecting silver for the Emperor's coffin in the street," and in Kiev they "lacerated the portraits of the Emperor in the premises of the Municipal Duma."[118] Yet this last fact is precisely confirmed by the Tourau report.)

In Kiev, in October, the revolutionary movement was gaining momentum. Alexander Schlichter (future Bolshevik leader, specialist in flour requisitions and "Agriculture Commissioner" in Ukraine just before the great organised famine) fomented a south-western railway strike, paralysing the trains to Poltava, Kursk, Voronezh, and Moscow. Threats were made to force the workers of the Kiev mechanical construction factory to go on strike on 12 October. At the university, "exceptional collections 'for armaments' took place: the participants threw gold coins, bank notes, silverware, a lady even offered her earrings." "Flying detachments" were formed with the mission of interrupting by force the work in high schools, the factories, the transports, the commerce, and to "prepare the armed resistance to the forces of order." The whole movement "had to take to the streets." On the 14th of October, the newspapers ceased to appear, with the exception of *The Kievian*, aligned on the right; only the telegrammes relating to the liberation movement were allowed to pass. The "flying detachments" prevented the trams from rolling, breaking their windows (some passengers were wounded). At the first appearance of the agitators everything was closed, everything stopped; the post office closed its doors after a bomb threat; streams of students and pupils were converging towards the university at the call of Schlichter, as well as "young Jews of various professions".

It was then that the authorities took the first steps. It was forbidden to meet in the streets and in public squares, and the cordoning off by the army of the university and the Polytechnic took place in order for only the students to be allowed in, "arrest… of a few individuals for contempt of the police and the army", of some S.-R. and Social Democrats, of the lawyer Ratner, who "had actively participated in popular meetings" (Schlichter, him, had taken off). The trams began to circulate again, the shops re-opened their doors, and in Kiev the days of 16 and 17 October went by peacefully.

It was in this context (which was that of many other places in Russia) that the Emperor, relying on the gratitude of the population, launched on 17 October the Manifesto establishing the liberties and a parliamentary system of government. The news reached Kiev by telegram on the night of the 18th, and in the morning the text of the Manifesto was sold or distributed in the streets of the city (as for the newspaper *The Kievian*, "Jewish student youth rushed to buy it and immediately tear it ostensibly into pieces"). The authorities ordered *ipso facto* the release of both those who had

been arrested in the last days and those who had previously been “charged with assault on the security of the State”, with the exception, however, of those who had used explosives. Both the police and the army had deserted the streets, “important rallies” were formed, at first calmly. “In the vicinity of the university there was a large crowd of students, high school pupils and “a significant number of young Jews of both sexes”. Giving way to their demands, the rector “had the portal of the main building opened.” Immediately “the great hall was invaded by a part of the crowd which destroyed the portraits of the Emperor, tore up the red hangings” to make flags and banners, and some “noisily invited the public to kneel before Schlichter by virtue of victim of arbitrariness.” If “those who were near him actually fell on their knees,” another part of the public “considered that all that had just taken place was offensive to their national sentiments.” Then the crowd went to the Municipal Duma, and at its head Schlichter pranced around on a horse, displaying a red band, and at every halt harangued the crowd, claiming that “the struggle against the government was not over.” Meanwhile, in the Nicholas Park, “the Jews had thrown a rope around the statue of the Emperor [Nicholas I] and tried to overthrow it from its pedestal”; “At another place, Jews wearing red bands began to insult four soldiers who passed by, spitting on them”; the crowd threw stones on a patrol of soldiers, wounded six, and two demonstrators were hit by the firing of a riposte. However, the interim mayor was visited by a group of peaceful citizens who “asked for the opening of the meeting room of the municipal council” so that the grateful protesters could “express their feelings about the Manifesto. Their request was met” and a peaceful rally was held “under the presidency of the municipal councillor Scheftel.” But a new wave, many thousands of people wearing red badges and ribbons, flocked in; “it was made up of students, people of different social classes, age, sex and condition, but the Jews were especially noted for it”; one party burst into the meeting room, the others occupied the square in front of the Duma. “In a moment all the national flags which had decorated the Duma on the occasion of the Manifesto were torn out and replaced by red and black banners. At that moment a new procession approached, carrying at arm’s length the lawyer Ratner who had just gotten out of prison; he called the crowd to release all the other prisoners; on the balcony of the Duma, Schlichter publicly embraced him. For his part, the latter “exhorted the population to go on a general strike… and pronounced insulting words addressed to the person of the Sovereign. In the meantime, the crowd had torn the Emperor’s portraits hung in the assembly hall of the Duma, and broken the emblems of imperial power which had been placed on the balcony for the festivities.” “There is no doubt that these acts were perpetrated by both Russians and Jews”; a “Russian worker” had even begun to break the crown, some demanded that it should be put back in its place, “but a few moments later it was again thrown to the ground, this time by a Jew who then broke in half of the letter ‘N’”; “Another young man, Jewish in appearance,” then attacked the jewels of the diadem. All the furniture of the Duma was shattered, the administrative documents torn. Schlichter directed the operations: in the corridors, “money was collected for unknown purposes”. Excitement in front of the Duma, however, only increased; perched on the roof of stationary trams, orators delivered fiery speeches; but it was Ratner and Schlichter who were the most successful from the balcony of the Duma. “An apprentice of Jewish nationality began shouting from the balcony: ‘Down with the autocracy!’; another Jew, properly dressed: ‘Same to the swine!’”; “Another Jew, who had cut the tsar’s head from the picture, reproducing him, introduced his own by the orifice thus formed, and began to yell at the balcony: ‘I am the tsar!’”; “the building of the Duma passed completely into the hands of revolutionary socialist extremists as well as the Jewish youth who had sympathised with them, losing all control of itself.”

I dare say that something stupid and evil has revealed itself in this frantic jubilation: the inability to remain within certain limits. What, then, prompted these Jews, in the midst of the delirious plebs, to trample so brutally what the people still venerated? Aware of the precarious situation of their people and their families, on 18 and 19 October they could not, in dozens of cities, refrain from embarking in such events with such passion, to the point of becoming its soul and sometimes its main actors?

Let us continue reading the Tourau report: “Respect for the national sentiment and the symbols venerated by the people was forgotten. As if a part of the population… did not shy away from any means of expressing its contempt…”; “the indignities carried out to the portraits of the Emperor excited an immense popular emotion. Cries came from the crowd gathered in front of the Duma: ‘Who has dethroned the tsar?’, others wept.” “Without being a prophet, one could foresee that such offences would not be forgiven to the Jews,” “voices rose to express astonishment at the inaction of the authorities; here and there, in the crowd… they began to shout: ‘We must break some kikes!’” Near the Duma, the police and an infantry company stood idly by. At that moment, a squadron of dragoons appeared briefly, greeted by shots from the windows and the balcony of the Duma; they began to bombard the infantry company with stones and bottles, to blast it from all sides: the Duma, the Stock Exchange, the crowd of demonstrators. Several soldiers were wounded; the captain gave orders to open fire. There were seven dead and one hundred and thirty wounded. The crowd

dispersed. But on the evening of the 18th of October, “the news of the degradations committed on the Emperor’s portraits, the crown, the emblems of the monarchy, the national flag, circled the city, and spread into the suburbs. Small groups of passers-by, mostly workers, craftsmen, merchants, who commented on the events with animation put the full responsibility for them on the Jews, who always stood out clearly from the other demonstrators.” “In the Podol district, the workers’ crowd decided to seize all the ‘democrats’… who had fomented the disturbances and placed them in a state of arrest ‘pending the orders of His Majesty the Emperor’.” In the evening, “a first group of demonstrators gathered in the Alexander Plaza, brandishing the portrait of the Emperor and singing the national anthem. The crowd grew rapidly and, as many Jews returned from the Krechtchatik with red insignia in the buttonhole, they were taken for the perpetrators of the disorders perpetrated in the Duma and became the target of aggressions; some were beaten.” This was already the beginning of the pogrom against the Jews.

Now, to understand both the unpardonable inaction of the authorities during the sacking of the Duma and the destruction of the national emblems, but also their even more unpardonable inaction during the pogrom itself, one has to take a look at what was happening *within* the organs of power. At first glance, one might think it was the result of a combination of circumstances. But their accumulation has been such in Kiev (as well as in other places) that one cannot fail to discern the mismanagement of the imperial administration of the last years, the consequences of which were fatal.

As for the governor of Kiev, he was simply absent. Vice-Governor Rafalski had just taken office, had not had time to find his bearings, and lacked confidence in the exercise of *temporary* responsibilities. Above him, Governor General Kleigels, who had authority over a vast region, had, from the beginning of October, taken steps to be released from his duties—for health reasons. (His real motivations remain unknown, and it is not excluded that his decision was dictated by the bubbling revolution of September, which he did not know how to control.) In any case, he, too, considered himself as *temporary*, while in October the directives of the Ministry of the Interior continued to rain on him—10 October: take the most energetic measures “to prevent disorder in the street and to put an end to it by all means in case they occur”; 12: “repress street demonstrations, do not hesitate to use armed force”; 13: “do not tolerate any rally or gathering in the streets and, if necessary, disperse them by force”. On 14 October, as we have seen, the unrest in Kiev has crossed a dangerous limit. Kleigels brought together his close collaborators, including the Kiev chief of police, Colonel Tsikhotski, and the deputy head of security (again, the leader was absent), Kouliabka, a man as agitated as he was ineffective, the very one who, by stupidity, was about to expose Stolypin to the blows of his assassin.[*] From the panicked report of the latter stemmed the possibility not only of demonstrations of armed people in the streets of Kiev, but also of an armed insurrection. Kleigels, therefore, renounced reliance on the police, put in place the provisions for “recourse to the armed forces to assist the civil authorities”—and, on 14 October, handed over “his full powers to the military command”, more precisely to the commander—on a *temporary* basis once again (the commander himself is absent, but it must be said that the situation is anything but worrying!)—from the Kiev military region, the general Karass. The responsibility for security in the city was entrusted to General Drake. (Is it not comical enough: which of the surnames that have just been enumerated makes it possible to suppose that the action is taking place in Russia?) General Karass “found himself in a particularly difficult situation” insofar as he did not know the “data of the situation nor of the staff of the administration and of the police”; “By giving him his powers, General Kleigels did not consider it necessary to facilitate the work of his successor; he confined himself to respecting forms, and at once ceased to deal with anything.”

It is now time to talk about the chief of police, Tsikhotski. As early as 1902, an administrative inspection had revealed that he concealed the practice of extortion of the Jews in exchange for the right of residence. It was also discovered that he lived “above his means”, that he had bought—as well as for his son-in-law—properties worth 100,000 rubles. It was considered that he should be brought to justice when Kleigels was appointed Governor-General; very quickly (and, of course, not without having received a large bribe), the latter intervened so that Tsikhotski was kept at his post and even obtained a promotion and the title of general. Regarding the promotion, it did not work, but there were no penalties either, although General Trepov had been working towards this end from Petersburg. Tsikhotski was informed at the beginning of October that Kleigels had asked to leave his post at the end of the month—his morale fell even lower, he saw himself already condemned. And on the night of the 18th of October, at the same time as the Imperial Manifesto, the official confirmation of the retirement of Kleigels came from Saint Petersburg. Tsikhotski now had nothing to lose. (Another detail: even though the situation was so troubled, Kleigels left his post *even before* the arrival of his successor, who was none other than the pearl of the Imperial administration, General Sukhomlinov, the

future Minister of Defence who scuttled the preparations for the war against Germany; as for the functions of Governor-General, they were *temporarily* assumed by the aforesaid General Karass.) And it was thus that "there was no rapid termination of the confusion that had settled within the police after the handing over of power to the army, but that it only increased to manifest itself with the greatest acuity during the disorders."

The fact that Kleigels had "renounced his 'full powers'… and that these had been handed over for an indefinite period to the military authorities of the city of Kiev is mainly at the origin of the uncertain mutual relations which later established themselves between civil authorities and military authorities"; "the extent and limits of the powers [of the army] were not known to anybody" and this vagueness "lead to a general disorganisation of services."

This manifested itself from the beginning of the pogrom against the Jews. "Many police officers were convinced that the power had been fully handed over to the military command and that only the army was competent to act and to repress the disorders"; that is why they "did not feel concerned by the disorders which took place in their presence. As for the army, referring to an article of the provisions on the use of the armed forces to assist the civil authorities, it was awaiting indications from the police, considering with reason that it was not its responsibility to fulfil the missions of the latter": these provisions "stipulated precisely" that the civil authorities "present at the scene of the disorders should guide the joint action of the police and the army with a view to their repression." It was also up to the civil authorities to determine when to use force. Moreover, "Kleigels had not considered it useful to inform the military command about the situation in the city, nor had he told it what he knew about the revolutionary movement in Kiev. And this is what made units of the army begin to scour the city aimlessly."

So, the pogrom against the Jews began in the evening of 18 October. "At its initial stage, the pogrom undoubtedly assumed the character of retaliation against the offence to national sentiment. The assaults against the Jews passed in the street, the destruction of shops and the merchandise they contained were accompanied by words such as: 'Here it is, your liberty! Here it is, your Constitution and your revolution! This, this is for the portraits of the tsar and the crown!'" The next morning, 19 October, a large crowd came from the Duma to the Cathedral of Saint Sophia, bearing the empty frames of the Tsar's portraits and the broken emblems of the imperial power. It stopped at the university to have the damaged portraits restored; a mass was celebrated and "the Metropolitan Flavian exhorted the people not to indulge in excesses and return home". "But while the people who formed the heart of the patriotic demonstration… maintained an exemplary order, individuals who joined them along the way allowed themselves to be subjected to all kinds of violence against the Jewish passers-by, as well as high school pupils or students in uniform." They were then joined by "the workers, the homeless of the flea market, the bums"; "groups of rioters sacked the houses and shops of the Jews, threw into the street their goods and merchandise, which were partly destroyed on the spot, partly plundered"; "the servants, the guardians of buildings, the little shopkeepers apparently saw nothing wrong with taking advantage of the property of others"; "others, on the contrary, remained isolated to all interested goals until the last day of the disorders," "they tore from the hands of their companions the objects that they had stolen and, without paying attention to their value, destroyed them on the spot." The rioters did not touch the shops of the Karaites nor the "houses where they were presented portraits of the Emperor." "But, on the whole, only a few hours after it had begun, the pogrom took the form of a pitiless rampage. On the 18th, it continued long into the night, then stopped on its own, to resume on the morning of the 19th, and to cease only on the evening of the 20th. (There were no fires, except one in the Podol district.) On the 19th, "luxury shops belonging to Jews were sacked as far as the city centre on the Krechtchatik. The heavy metal curtains and the locks were forced after half an hour of hard work"; "Expensive textiles, velvet cloths were thrown into the street and spread out in the mud, in the rain, like rags of no value. In front of the shop of the jeweller Markisch, on the Krechtchatik, the pavement was littered with precious objects"—and the same for fashion shops, the dry goods stores; the pavement was fraught with account books, invoices. In Lipki (the chic neighbourhood) "the private mansions of Jews were sacked,—that of Baron Ginzburg, of Halperine, of Alexander and Leon Brodksy, of Landau, and many more. All the luxurious decoration of these houses was destroyed, the furniture broken and thrown into the street"; likewise, "a model secondary school for the Jews, the Brodsky school, was ravaged," "there was nothing left of the marble staircases and the wrought iron ramps." In all, it was "nearly fifteen hundred apartments and commercial premises belonging to Jews were plundered." Starting from the fact that "nearly two-thirds of the city's trade was in the hands of Jews," Tourau assessed losses—including the richest mansions—to "several million rubles." It had been planned to ransack not only Jewish houses, but also those of prominent liberal personalities. On the 19th, Bishop Plato "led a procession through the streets of Podol where the pogrom had been particularly violent, urging the people to put an end to the

abuses. Imploring the crowd to spare the lives and property of the Jews, the bishop knelt several times before it… A broken man came out of the crowd and shouted threateningly: 'You too, you're for the Jews?'"

We have already seen the carelessness that prevailed among the authorities. "General Drake did not take appropriate measures to ensure the proper organisation of security." The troops "should not have been scattered in small detachments," "there were too many patrols," and "the men often stayed idle." And here we are: "What struck everyone during the pogrom was the obvious inaction, close to complacency, which was shown by both the army and the police. The latter was virtually absent, and the troops moved slowly, merely replying to the shots fired from certain houses, while on either side of the street the shops and apartments of the Jews were sacked with impunity." A prosecutor asked a patrol of Cossacks to intervene to protect stores that were looted nearby; "the Cossacks replied that they would not go, that it was not their sector."

More serious still: a whole series of witnesses had "the impression that the police and the army had been dispatched not to disperse the breakers but to protect them." Here the soldiers declared that they had "been ordered to ensure that there were no clashes and that the Russians were not attacked." Elsewhere they said that if they had "taken an oath to God and to the tsar," it was not to protect "those who had lacerated and jeered at the portraits of the tsar." As for the officers, "they considered themselves powerless to prevent disorders, and felt themselves entitled to use force only in cases where the violence was directed against their men." Example: of a house "ran out a Jew covered with blood, pursued by the crowd. An infantry company was right there, but it paid no attention to what was going on and quietly went up the street." Elsewhere, "the plunderers were massacring two Jews with table legs; a detachment of cavalry stationed ten paces away contemplated placidly the scene." It is not surprising that the man in the street could have understood things like this: "The tsar graciously granted us the right to beat the kikes for six days"; and the soldiers: "You see, is all this conceivable without the approval of the authorities?" For their part, the police officers, "when they were demanded to put an end to the disorders, objected that they could do nothing to the extent that the full powers had been transferred to the military command." But there was also a large crowd of thugs that took flight "due to a police commissioner who brandished his revolver, assisted by only one peacekeeper", and "police officer Ostromenski, with three patrolmen and some soldiers, succeeded in preventing acts of looting in his neighbourhood without even resorting to force."

The looters did not have firearms, while the young Jews, they, had some. However, unlike what happened in Gomel, here the Jews had not organised their self-defence, even though "shots were fired from many houses" by members of self-defence groups who included in their ranks "both Jews and Russians who had taken their part"; "It is undeniable that in some cases these shots were directed against the troops and constituted acts of retaliation for the shots fired on the crowd during the demonstrations" of the previous days; "Sometimes Jews fired on the patriotic parades organised in response to the revolutionary demonstrations that had taken place before." But these shots "had deplorable consequences. Without producing any effect on the rioters, they gave the troops a pretext to apply their instructions to the letter"; "as soon as shots came from a house, the troops who were there, without even inquiring whether they were directed against them or against the rioters, sent a salvo into its windows, after which the crowd" rushed in and ransacked it. "We saw cases where we were firing at a house solely because someone had claimed that shots had gone"; "it also happened that the looters climbed the stairs of a house and fired shots towards the street to provoke the troops' retaliation" and then engage in plundering.

And things got worse. "Some of the policemen and soldiers did not disdain the goods thrown into the street by the vandals, picked them up and hid them in their pockets or under their hoods." And, although these cases "were exceptional and punctual", one still saw a police officer dismantling the door of a shop himself, and a corporal imitating him. (The false rumours of looting by the army began to circulate when General Evert ordered in his area to confiscate goods taken by the looters and stolen goods and to transport them to the warehouses of the army for subsequent restitution to their owners on presentation of a receipt, thus saving property worth several tens of thousands of rubles.)

It is hardly surprising that this scoundrel of Tsikhotski, seeing his career broken, not only did not take any action concerning the action of the police (having learned of the beginning of the pogrom on the evening of the 18th, he did not communicate by telegram any information to the neighbourhood police stations before late in the evening on the 19th), not only did he not transmit any information to the generals of military security, but he himself, passing through the city, had "considered what was going on with calm and indifference", contenting himself to say to the plunderers: "Move

along, gentlemen" (and those few, encouraged one another: "Do not be afraid, he's joking!"); and when, from the balcony of the Duma, they began to shout: "Pound the kikes, plunder, break!" And the crowd then carried the chief of police in triumph, the latter "addressed greetings in response to the cheering of the demonstrators." It was not until the 20th, after General Karass had sent him a severe warning (as to the Director of the Governor-General's Chancery, he declared that Tsikhovsky would not escape the penal colony), that he ordered the police to take all measures to put an end to the pogrom. Senator Tourau effectively had to bring him to justice.

Another security official, disgruntled with his career, General Bessonov, "was in the midst of the crowd of rioters and was peacefully parleying with them: 'We have the right to demolish, but it is not right to steal.' The crowd shouted: 'Hurray!'" At another moment he behaved "as an indifferent witness to the plunder. And when one of the breakers shouted: 'Slam the kikes!' [Bessonov] reacted with an approving laugh." He reportedly told a doctor that "if he had wanted to, he could have put an end to the pogrom in half an hour, but the Jews' participation in the revolutionary movement had been too great, they had to pay the price." After the pogrom, summoned by the military authorities to explain himself, he denied having spoken favourably of the pogrom and declared, on the contrary, to have exhorted people to return to calm: "Have mercy on us, do not force the troops to use their weapons… to shed Russian blood, our own blood!"

Delegations went one after the other to General Karass, some requesting that some of them take troops out of the city, others for the use of force, and others for taking measures to protect their property. However, throughout the day of the 19th, the police did nothing and the military executed orders badly. On 20 October, Karass ordered "to encircle and apprehend the hooligans." Many arrests were made; once, the army opened fire on the rioters, killing five and wounding several others. By the evening of the 20th, the pogrom was definitely over, but late in the evening "the rumour that the Jews murdered Russians sowed dismay among the population"; retaliation was feared.

During the pogrom, according to police estimates (but a number of victims were taken by the crowd), there were a total of 47 deaths, including 12 Jews, and 205 wounded, one-third of them Jews.

Tourau concludes his report by explaining that "the root cause of the Kiev pogrom lies in the traditional enmity between the population of Little Russia and the Jewish population, motivated by differences of opinion. As for its immediate cause, it resides in the outrage of national sentiment caused by the revolutionary manifestations to which the Jewish youth had taken an active part." The working class "imputed to the Jews only" the responsibility for the "blasphemies uttered against what was most sacred to them. They could not understand, after the grace granted by the Emperor, the very existence of the revolutionary movement, and explained it by the desire of the Jews to obtain 'their own liberties'." "The flip side of the war in which Jewish youth had always openly expressed its deepest satisfaction, its refusal to fulfil its military obligations, its participation in the revolutionary movement, acts of violence and the killings of agents of the State, its insulting attitude towards the armed forces… all this incontestably provoked exasperation towards the Jews among the working class," and "this is why in Kiev there have been several cases where many Russians gave open shelter to unfortunate Jews who fled from the violence, but categorically refused Jewish youth."

As for the newspaper *The Kievian*, it wrote[119]: "Poor Jews! Where is the fault of these thousands of families? … For their misfortune, these poor Jews could not control their brainless youngsters … But brainless youngsters, there are also some among us, the Russians, and we could not control them either!"

The revolutionary youth scoured the countryside, but it was the peaceful adult Jews who had to pay the piper.

Thus, on both sides, we have dug a bottomless abyss.

*

As for the Odessa pogrom, we have a similar and equally detailed report, that of Senator Kozminski.[120]

In Odessa, where a lively revolutionary sentiment had always existed, the tremors had started since January; the

blast took place on the 13th of June (independently, therefore, of the arrival of the *Potemkin* battleship in the harbour of Odessa on the 14th). The entire day of the 14th of June passed in turmoil, especially among the young, but this time also among the workers, whose "numerous crowds began to impose by force the cessation of work in plants and factories." A crowd "of about three hundred people attempted to break into a [tea] parlour… Several shots were fired at the head of the local police station, who was preventing the crowd from entering, but the latter was dispersed" by a salvo shot by a detachment of policemen. "However, the crowd soon re-formed," and proceeded to the police station; some shots were fired from the Doks house: "from the windows and the balcony, several shots were fired at the police officers." Another group "erected a barricade with building materials in the street, and then began shooting at a police detachment." In another street, a crowd of the same kind "overturned several tramway wagons with horses". "A fairly large group of Jews broke into a tin factory, threw tobacco in the eyes [of a police officer]…, scattered at the appearance of a police detachment while opening fire with revolvers; among them four Jews [their names follow] were arrested on the spot"; at a crossroads, "a gathering of Jews was formed, [two of them] fired revolver shots at a mounted guard"; "in general, throughout the day of 14 June, almost all the streets of the city were the scene of clashes between Jews and the security forces, during which they used firearms and projectiles," wounding several police officers. "A dozen Jews were also wounded," which the crowd took to hide them. As he tried to escape, a certain Tsipkine threw a bomb, causing his own death as well as that of police officer Pavlovski.

It was at this time that the *Potemkin* entered the Odessa harbour! A crowd of nearly five thousand people assembled, "many men and women gave speeches calling the people for an uprising against the government"; among the students who got aboard the battleship were Konstantin Feldman (who urged to support the movement in town by cannonading it, but "the majority of the crew opposed it").

And the authorities in all this? The governor of Odessa—in other words, the head of the police—Neudhart, was already completely distraught on the day of the arrival of the *Potemkin*; he felt (as in Kiev) that "the civil authorities were unable to restore order, and that is why he had handed over all subsequent decisions aimed at the cessation of disorder to the military command, that is to say, the commander of the Odessa garrison, General Kakhanov. (Did there exist a superior authority to that one in Odessa? Yes, of course, and it was Governor General Karangozov, who, as the reader will have guessed, was acting on a *temporary* basis, and felt hardly at ease.) General Kakhanov found nothing better than to have the port sealed by the army and to enclose the thousands of "unsafe elements" who had gathered there to cut them off—not yet contaminated—from the city.

On 15 June, the uprising in Odessa and the *Potemkin* mutiny collapsed into one movement: the inhabitants of the city, "among whom many students and workers" boarded the battleship, exhorting "the crew to common actions". The crowd in the harbour rushed to "plunder the goods that were stored there", beginning with the boxes of wine; then stormed the warehouses to which it set fire (more than 8 million rubles of losses). The fire threatened the quarantine port where foreign vessels were anchored and import goods were stored. Kakhanov still could not resolve to put an end to the disorder by force, fearing that the *Potemkin* would reply by bombarding the city. The situation remained equally explosive on the 15th. The next day the *Potemkin* drew five salvos on the town, three of them blank, and called on the commander of the armed forces to board the ship to demand the withdrawal "of the troops from the city and the release of all political prisoners." On the same day, 16 June, at the funeral of the only sailor killed, "scarcely had the procession entered the town than it was joined by all kinds of individuals who soon formed a crowd of several thousand persons, principally young Jews," and on the grave an orator, "after shouting 'Down with the autocracy!', called on his comrades to act with more determination, without fear of the police."

But that very day, and for a long time, the state of siege was proclaimed in the city. The *Potemkin* had to take off to escape the squadron that had come to capture it. And although the four days it had been anchored in the port Odessa "and the many contacts which had been established between the people and it substantially raised the morale of the revolutionaries" and "gave rise to the hope of a possible future support of the armed forces", despite of that the summer was going to end calmly, perhaps even no upset would have occurred in Odessa if, on the 27th of August, had been promulgated the incomparable law on the autonomy of higher education institutions! Immediately, "a 'soviet coalition' was formed by the students," which, "by its determination and audacity, succeeded in bringing under its influence not only the student community but also the teaching force" (professors feared "unpleasant confrontations with the students, such as the boycott of classes, the expulsion of such and such professor from the amphi, etc.").

Large gatherings took place at the university, “fund-raising to arm the workers and the proletariat, for the military insurrection, for the purchase of weapons with a view to forming militias and self-defence groups”, “discussions were held about the course of action to be taken at the time of the insurrection.” At these meetings the “faculty of professors” took an active part, “sometimes with the rector Zantchevski at its head,” who promised to “make available to the students all the means at their disposal to facilitate their participation in the liberation movement.”

On 17 September, the first meeting at the university took place “in the presence of an outside public so numerous that it had to be split into two groups”; The S.-R. Teper “and two Jewish students made speeches calling on the public to lead the struggle to free the country from political oppression and a deleterious autocracy.” On 30 September, the state of siege was lifted in Odessa and henceforth rushed to these meetings “students of all educational establishments, some of whom were not more than fourteen years old”; the Jews “were the principal orators, calling for open insurrection and armed struggle.”

On 12 and 13 October, before all other *secondary* schools, “the pupils of two business schools, that of the Emperor Nicholas I and that of Feig, ceased to attend classes, being the most sensitive to revolutionary propaganda”; on the 14th, it was decided to halt the work in all the other secondary schools, and business schools and the students went to all the high schools of the city to force the pupils to go on course strikes. The rumour went around that in front of the Berezina high school, three students and three high school students had been wounded with swords by police officers. Certainly, “the investigation would establish with certainty that none of the young people had been affected and that the pupils had not yet had time to leave the school.” But this kind of incident, what a boon to raise the revolutionary pressure! On the same day, the courses ceased at the university, forty-eight hours after the start of the school year; the striking students burst into the municipal Duma shouting: “Death to Neudhart!” and demanding that they stop paying salaries to the police.

After the episode of the *Potemkin*, Neudhart had regained power in his hands, but until the middle of October he did not make any measure against the revolutionary meetings—besides, could he do very much when the autonomy of universities had been established? On the 15th he received orders from the Ministry of the Interior to prohibit the entrance of outsiders to the university, and on the following day he surrounded the latter by the army, while ordering the cartridges to be taken out from the armouries, until then sold over-the-counter. “The closure of the university to the outside world provoked great agitation among Jewish students and Jewish youth,” an immense crowd set out, closing the shops on its way (the American armoury was plundered), overturning streetcars and omnibuses, sawing trees to make barricades, cutting off telegraph and telephone wires for the same purpose, dismantling the gates of the parks. Neudhart asked Kakhanov to have the town occupied by the troops. Then, “the barricades behind which the demonstrators had gathered—mostly Jews, among them women and adolescents—, they began to fire on the troops; shots were fired from the roofs of houses, balconies, and windows”; the army opened fire in its turn, the demonstrators were scattered and the barricades dismantled. “It is impossible to accurately estimate the number of deaths and injuries that occurred on that day, as the health team—consisting mainly of Jewish students in red-white blouses with a red cross—hurried to take the wounded and the dead to the university infirmary”—thus in an autonomous and inaccessible zone—, “at the Jewish hospital or at the emergency stations near the barricades, as well as in almost all pharmacies.” (They had stopped delivering medicine even before the events.) According to the governor of the city, there were nine deaths, nearly 80 wounded, including some policemen. “Among the participants in the disorders were apprehended that day 214 people, of whom 197 Jews, a large number of women, and 13 children aged 12 to 14 years.”

And all this, still twenty-four hours before the incendiary effect of the Manifesto was felt.

One might think that by exposing the role of the Jews so frequently in revolutionary movements, the Senate’s report was biased. But it must be borne in mind that in Odessa the Jews represented one-third of the population, and, as we have seen, a very significant proportion of the student population; it must also be borne in mind that the Jews had taken an active part in the Russian revolutionary movement, especially in the Pale of Settlement. In addition, Senator Kouzminski’s report provides evidence of its objectivity in many places.

On 16 October, “when they arrived at the police station, the people arrested were victims of assault by the police and soldiers”; however, “neither the governor of the city nor the police officials responded in due course… and no investigation was carried out”; it was not until later that more than twenty of those who had been in this precinct

declared that “those arrested had been systematically beaten; first they were pushed down a staircase leading to the basement… many of them fell to the ground and it was then that policemen and soldiers, arranged in a row, beat them with the back of their sabres, rubber truncheons, or simply their feet and fists”; the women were not spared. (It is true that, on the same evening, municipal councillors and justices of the peace went to the scene and gathered complaints from the victims. As for the senator, he identified several culprits during his inquiry in November and had them brought to justice.)

“On the 17th of October, the whole town was occupied by the army, patrols were criss-crossing the streets, and public order was not troubled all day. However, the Municipal Duma had met to discuss emergency measures, including how to replace the state police with an urban militia. On the same day, the Bund’s local committee decided to organise a solemn funeral for the victims who had fallen the day before on the barricades, but Neudhart, understanding that such a demonstration would cause, as always, a new revolutionary explosion, “gave the order to remove in secret, of the Jewish hospital” where they were, the five corpses and “to bury them before the scheduled date”, which was done on the night of 18. (The next day the organisers demanded that the corpses be unearthed and brought back to the hospital. Due to the developments of events, the bodies were embalmed there and remained in that state for a long time.) And it was at this time that the news of the Imperial Manifesto spread, pushing Odessa towards new storms.

Let us quote first of all the testimony of members of a Jewish self-defence detachment: “During the pogrom, there was a certain coordination centre that worked quite well… Universities played an enormous role in the preparation of the events of October… the soviet coalition of the Odessa University included” a Bolshevik, a Menshevik, an S.-R., a representative of the Bund, Zionist Socialists, the Armenian communities, Georgian and Polish ones as well. “Student detachments were formed even before the pogrom”; during “immense meetings at the university”, money was collected to buy weapons, “of course not only to defend ourselves, but with a view to a possible insurrection.” “The soviet coalition also raised funds to arm the students”; “when the pogrom broke out, there were two hundred revolvers at the university,” and “a professor… procured another hundred and fifty others.” A “dictator” was appointed at the head of each detachment “without taking into account his political stance”, and “it happened that a detachment composed mainly of members of the Bund was commanded by a Zionist-Socialist, or vice versa”; “on Wednesday [19 October], a large quantity of weapons were distributed in a pro-Zionist synagogue”; “the detachments were made up of Jewish and Russian students, Jewish workers, young Jews of all parties, and a very small number of Russian workers.”[121]

A few years later, Jabotinsky wrote that during the pogroms of the year 1905 “the new Jewish soul had already reached its maturity.”[122] And in the still rose-tinted atmosphere of the February Revolution, a major Russian newspaper gave the following description: “When, during the Neudhart pogroms in 1905, the young militiamen of self-defence travelled through Odessa, weapons in their fists, they aroused emotion and admiration, we were heavy-hearted, we were touched and full of compassion…”[123]

And this is what one of our contemporaries wrote: “The courage shown by Gomel’s fighters inflames tens of thousands of hearts. In Kiev, 1,500 people are engaged in self-defence detachments, in Odessa several thousands.”[124] But in Odessa, the number of combatants as well as their state of mind—and, in response, the brutality of the police forces—gave a much different turn to events than they had experienced in Kiev.

Let us go back to the Kuzminski report. After the proclamation of the Manifesto, on the morning of the 18th, General Kaoulbars, commanding the military district of Odessa, in order “to give the population the possibility of enjoying without restrictions the freedom in all its forms granted by the Manifesto,” ordered the troops not to appear in the streets, “so as not to disturb the joyous humour of the population.” However, “this joyous mood did not last.” On all sides “groups of Jews and students began to flock towards the city centre,” brandishing red flags and shouting: “Down with the autocracy!”, while speakers called for revolution. On the façade of the Duma, two of the words forming the inscription in metal letters “God save the Tsar” were broken; the Council Chamber was invaded, “a large portrait of His Majesty the Emperor was torn to shreds,” the national flag which floated on the Duma was replaced by a red flag. The headdresses of three ecclesiastics, who were in a cab at a funeral, were stolen; later, the funeral procession they conducted was repeatedly stopped, “religious songs interrupted by cheers.” “There was a headless scarecrow bearing the inscription ‘Here is the Autocracy’, and a dead cat was showed off while collecting money ‘to demolish the tsar’ or ‘for Nicholas’s death’.” “The young people, especially the Jews, who were obviously aware of their superiority, taught the

Russians that their freedom had not been freely granted to them, that it had been torn from the government by the Jews… They declared openly to the Russians: 'Now we are going to govern you'," but also: "We have given you God, we will give you a tsar." A large crowd of Jews waving red flags long pursued two peacekeepers, one of them managed to escape by the roofs, while on the other, a man named Goubiy, the crowd "armed with revolvers, axes, stakes, and iron bars, found him in an attic, and hurt him so badly that he died during his transport to the hospital; the concierge of the building found two of his fingers cut by axe." Later, three police officers were beaten and wounded, and the revolvers of five peacekeepers were confiscated. The prisoners were then freed in one, two, and three police stations (where on the 16th there had been beatings, but the detainees had already been released on the orders of Neudhart; in one of these precincts, the liberation of the prisoners was negotiated in exchange for Goubiy's corpse; sometimes there was nobody behind bars. As for the rector of the university, he actively participated in all this, transmitting to the prosecutor the demands of "a crowd of five thousand people", while "the students went so far as to threaten to hang the police officers". Neudhart solicited the advice of the mayor of the city, Kryjanovsky, and a professor at the university, Shtchepkin, but they only demanded that he "disarm the police on the spot and make it invisible," otherwise, added Shchepkin, "the victims of popular revenge cannot be saved, and the police will be legitimately disarmed by force." (Interrogated later by the senator, he denied having spoken so violently, but one can doubt his sincerity in view of the fact that on the same day he had distributed 150 revolvers to the students and that, during the inquiry, he refused to say where he had procured them.) After this interview, Neudhart ordered (without even warning the chief of police) to withdraw all the peacekeepers "in such a way that from that moment the whole of the city was deprived of any visible police presence"—which could have been understood if the measure had been intended to protect the life of the agents, but at the same time, the streets had been deserted by the army, which, for the moment, was pure stupidity. (But we remember that in Petersburg this was precisely what the press owners demanded from Witte, and it had been difficult for him to resist them.)

"After the police left, two types of armed groups appeared: the student militia and the Jewish self-defence detachments. The first was set up by the 'soviet coalition' which had procured arms." Now, "the municipal militia, made up of armed students and other individuals, placed themselves on guard" instead of policemen. This was done with the assent of General Baron Kaulbars and the governor of the city, Neudhart, while the police chief, Golovin, offered his resignation in protest and was replaced by his deputy, von Hobsberg. A provisional committee was set up at the Municipal Duma; in one of his first statements, he expressed his gratitude to the students of the university "for their way of ensuring the security of the city with energy, intelligence, and devotion". The committee itself assumed rather vague functions. (During the month of November the press took an interest in one of the members of this committee, also a member of the Duma of the Empire, O. I. Pergament, and in the second Duma somebody had to recall that he proclaimed himself President "of the Republic of the Danube and the Black Sea," or "President of the Republic of South Russia,"[125] in the intoxication of those days, this was not unlikely.)

And what could happen after the streets had been deserted, during these feverish days, by both the army and the police, and that the power had passed into the hands of an inexperienced student militia and groups of self-defence? "The militia arrested persons who seemed suspicious to it and sent them to the university for examination"; here a student "walked at the head of a group of Jews of about sixty persons who fired revolver shots at random"; "the student militia and Jewish self-defence groups themselves perpetrated acts of violence directed against the army and peaceful elements of the Russian population, using firearms and killing innocent people."

The confrontation "was inevitable, given the crystallisation of two antagonistic camps among the population." On the evening of the 18th, "a crowd of demonstrators waving red flags, and composed predominantly of Jews, tried to impose a stoppage of work at the factory at Guen… The workers refused to comply with this demand; after which the same crowd, crossing Russian workmen in the street, demanded that they should uncover themselves before the red flags. As the latter refused,"—well here it is, the proletariat!—from the crowd "shots were fired; the workers, though unarmed, succeeded in dispersing it," and pursued it until it was joined by another crowd of armed Jews, up to a thousand people, who began to fire on the workmen…; four of them were killed. This is how "brawls and armed clashes between Russians and Jews were unleashed at various points in the city; Russian workers and individuals without any definite occupation, also known as *hooligans*, began to chase the Jews and to beat them up, and then move on with the rampage and destruction of houses, apartments and shops belonging to Jews." It was then that a police commissioner called "an infantry company which put an end to the clashes."

On the following day, 19 October, “towards 10, 11 in the morning, there were seen forming in the streets… crowds of Russian workers and persons of various professions carrying icons, portraits of His Majesty the Emperor, as well as the national flag, and singing religious hymns. These patriotic demonstrations composed exclusively of Russians were formed simultaneously at several locations in the city, but their starting point was in the port from where set off a first manifestation of workmen, especially numerous.” There exists “reasons to assert that the anger provoked by the offensive attitude of the Jews over the whole of the previous day, their arrogance and their contempt for the national sentiment shared by the Russian population had to, in one way or another, lead to a reaction of protest.” Neudhart was not ignorant of the fact that a demonstration was being prepared and he authorised it, and it passed under the windows of the commander of the military district and the governor of the city, and then proceeded to the cathedral. “As it went on, the crowd was swollen by the addition of passers-by, including a large number of hooligans, tramps, women and adolescents.” (But it is appropriate here to draw a parallel between the story of a member of the Poalei Zion: “The pogrom of Odessa was not the work of hooligans… During these days the police did not allow entrance to the city to the tramps of the port,”; “it was the small artisans and the small merchants who gave free rein to their exasperation, the workers and apprentices of various workshops, plants, or factories”, “Russian workers lacking political consciousness”; “I went to Odessa only to see a pogrom organised by provocation, but, alas, I did not find it!” And he explains it as hatred between nationalities.[126])

“Not far from the Cathedral Square…, several shots were fired towards the crowd of protesters, one of them killed a little boy who was carrying an icon”; “the infantry company who arrived on the spot was also greeted by gunfire.” They fired from the windows of the editorial office of the newspaper *Yuzhnoye Obozrenie*, and “during the entire route of the procession gunshots came from windows, balconies, roofs”; “moreover, explosive devices were launched in several places on the demonstrators”, “six people were killed” by one of them; in the centre of Odessa, “at the corner of Deribassov and Richelieu, three bombs were thrown on a squadron of Cossacks.” “There were many deaths and wounded among the demonstrators,” “not without reason the Russians blamed the Jews, and it is why shouts merged quickly from the crowd: ‘Beat up the kikes!’, ‘Death to the heebs!’,” and “at various points in the city the crowd rushed to the Jewish shops to plunder them”; “these isolated acts were rapidly transformed into a generalised pogrom: all the shops, houses and apartments of the Jews on the path of the demonstration were completely devastated, all their property destroyed, and what had escaped the vandals was stolen by the cohorts of hooligans and beggars who had followed the lead of the protesters”; “it was not uncommon for scenes of looting to unfold under the eyes of demonstrators carrying icons and singing religious hymns.” On the evening of the 19th, “the hatred of the antagonist camps reached its peak: each one hit and tortured mercilessly, sometimes with exceptional cruelty, and without distinction of sex or age, those who fell into their hands.” According to the testimony of a doctor at the university clinic, “hooligans threw children from the first or second floor onto the road; one of them grabbed a child by the feet and smashed his skull against the wall. For their part, the Jews did not spare the Russians, killing those they could at the first opportunity; during the day they did not show themselves in the streets, but fired on the passers-by from the doors, from the windows, etc., but in the evening they met in numerous groups,” going as far as “besieging police stations.” “The Jews were particularly cruel with police officers when they managed to catch them.” (Here is now the point of view of the Poalei Zion: “The press spread a legend that self-defence had taken a huge crowd of hooligans and locked them up in the university premises. Numbers in the order of 800 to 900 individuals were cited; it is in fact necessary to divide this number by ten. It was only at the beginning of the pogrom that the vandals were brought to the university, after which things took a completely different turn.”[127] There are also descriptions of the Odessa pogrom in the November 1905 issues of the newspaper *The Kievian*.[128])

And what about the police, in all this? In accordance with Neudhart’s stupid dispositions, “on 19 October… as on the following days, the police were totally absent from the streets of Odessa”: a few patrols, and only occasionally. “The vagueness that reigned in the relations between civil authorities and military authorities, which ran counter to the legal provisions,” had the consequence that “the police officers did not have a very clear idea of their obligations”; even more, “all the police officers, considering that the responsibility for the political upheavals was incumbent on the Jews” and that “these were revolutionaries, felt the greatest sympathy for the pogrom which was unfolding before their eyes and judged even superfluous to conceal themselves.” Worse: “In many cases, police officers themselves incited hooligans to ransack and loot Jewish houses, apartments, and shops”; and at the height of it: “in civilian clothes, without their insignia”, they themselves “took part in these rampages,” “directed the crowd,” and there were even “cases where police officers fired on the ground or in the air to make the military believe that these shots came from the windows of

houses belonging to Jews."

And it was the police who did that!

Senator Kouzminski brought to trial forty-two policemen, twenty-three of whom were officers.

And the army—"scattered over the immense territory of the city" and supposed to "act autonomously"? "The military also did not pay any attention to the pogroms, since they were not aware of their exact obligations and were not given any indication by the police officers", they "did not know against whom or according to what order they should use armed force; on the other hand, the soldiers could assume that the pogrom had been organised with the approval of the police." Consequently, "the army took no action against the vandals." Worse still, "there is evidence that soldiers and Cossacks also took part in the looting of shops and houses." "Some witnesses affirmed that soldiers and Cossacks massacred innocent people for no reason."

Again, these are innocent people who have paid for others.

"On 20 and 21 October, far from subsiding, the pogrom gained frightening momentum"; "the plunder and destruction of Jewish property, the acts of violence and the killings were openly perpetrated, and with complete impunity, day and night." (Point of view of the Poalei Zion: on the evening of the 20th, "the university was closed by the army" while "inside it, we had barricaded ourselves in the event of an assault by the troops. Detachments of self-defence no longer went into town." In the latter, on the other hand, "self-defence had organised itself spontaneously", "powerful detachments of townspeople", "equipped with weapons of opportunity: hatchets, cutlasses, limes", "defended themselves with determination and anger equal to those they were victims of, and succeeded in protecting their perimeter almost completely."[129]

On the 20th, a group of municipal councillors headed by the new mayor (the former Kryjanovsky, who noted his powerlessness in the face of what was happening in the university, where even weapons were being gathered, and had resigned on the 18th) went to General Kaulbars, "urging him to take all the power in his hands to the extent that the military command… alone is capable of saving the city." The latter explained to them that "before the declaration of the state of siege, the military command had no right to interfere in the decisions of the civil administration and had no other obligation" than to assist it when it requested it. "Not to mention that the firing of the troops and the bombs thrown at them made it extremely difficult to restore order." He finally agreed to intervene.—On the 21st of October he gave orders to take the most energetic measures against the buildings from which shots were fired and bombs were thrown. On the 22nd: "order to take down on the spot all those who guilty of attacks on buildings, businesses or persons." As early as the 21st, calm began to return to different parts of the city; from the 22nd, "the police ensured the surveillance of the streets" with the reinforcement of the army; "the streetcars began to circulate again and in the evening, one could consider that the order was restored in the city."

The number of victims was difficult to define and varies from one source to another. The Kuzminski report states that "according to information provided by the police, the number of people killed amounts to more than 500 persons, including more than 400 Jews; as to the number of injuries recorded by the police, it is 289…, of which 237 Jews. According to the data collected from the cemetery guardians, 86 funerals were celebrated in the Christian cemetery, 298 in the Jewish cemetery." In the hospitals were admitted "608 wounded, including 392 Jews." (However, many had to be those who refrained from going to hospitals, fearing that they would later be prosecuted.)—The *Jewish Encyclopædia* reports 400 deaths among the Jews.[130]—According to the Poalei Zion: based on the list published by the rabbinate of Odessa, "302 Jews were killed, including 55 members of self-defence detachments, as well as 15 Christians who were members of these same detachments"; "among the other deaths, 45 could not be identified; 179 men and 23 women were identified." "Many deaths among the vandals; no one counted them, nor cared to know their number; in any event, it is said that there were not less than a hundred."[131] As for the Soviet work already quoted, it did not hesitate to put forward the following figures: "more than 500 dead and 900 wounded among the Jews."[132]

One should also mention, by way of illustration, the hot reactions of the foreign press. In the *Berliner Tageblatt*,

even before the 21st of October, one could read: “Thousands and thousands of Jews are massacred in the south of Russia; more than a thousand Jewish girls and children were raped and strangled.”[133]

On the other hand, it is without exaggeration that Kuzmininski summarises the events: “By its magnitude and its violence, this pogrom surpassed all those who preceded it.”—He considers that the main person in charge is the governor of the city, Neudhart. The latter made an “unworthy concession” by yielding to Professor Chtchepkin’s demands, by withdrawing the police from the city and handing it over to a student militia that did not yet exist. On the 18th, “he did not take any measure… to disperse the revolutionary crowd that had gathered in the streets”, he tolerated that power would go to “the ramifications of Jews and revolutionaries” (did he not understand that reprisals in the form of a pogrom would follow?). His negligence could have been explained if he had handed power over to the army, but that did not happen “during the entire period of the troubles.” This did not, however, prevent him from broadcasting during the events fairly ambiguous statements and later, during the investigation, to lie to try to justify himself. Having established “the evidence of criminal acts committed in the exercise of his functions,” Senator Kouzminski had Neudhart brought to justice.

With respect to the military command, the senator had no power to do so. But he indicates that it was criminal on behalf of Kaulbars to yield on 18 October to the demands of the Municipal Duma and to withdraw the army from the streets of the city. On the 21st, Kaulbars also uses equivocal arguments in addressing the police officers gathered at the governor’s house: “Let us call things by name. It must be acknowledged that in our heart we all approve of this pogrom. But, in the exercise of our functions, we must not let the persecution we may feel for the Jews transpire. It is our duty to maintain order and to prevent pogroms and murders.”

The senator concluded his report by stating that “the troubles and disorders of October were provoked by causes of undeniably revolutionary character and found their culmination in an anti-Jewish pogrom solely because it was precisely the representatives of that nationality which had taken a preponderant part in the revolutionary movement.” But could we not add that it is also due to the long-standing laxity of the authorities over the excesses of which the revolutionaries were guilty?

But as “the conviction that the events of October were the sole cause of Neudhart’s actions…”, “his provocations”, immediately after the end of the disorders “several commissions were formed in Odessa, including the University, the Municipal Duma and the Council of the Bar Association”; they were actively engaged in collecting documents proving that “the pogrom was the result of a provocation.” But after examining the evidence, the senator “discovered… no evidence” and the investigation “did not reveal any facts demonstrating the participation of even a single police officer to the organisation of the patriotic manifestation.”

The senator’s report also highlights other aspects of the year 1905 and the general era.

On 21 October, “as rumours spread throughout the city that bombs were being made and weapons were being stored in large quantities within the university compound,” the military district commander proposed to have the buildings inspected by a Committee composed of officers and professors. The rector told him that “such an intrusion would violate the autonomy of the university”. Since the day it was proclaimed in August, the university was run by a commission composed of “twelve professors of extremist orientation”. (Shchepkin, for example, declared at a meeting on October 7th: “When the hour strikes and you knock on our door, we will join you on your *Potemkin*!”), But this commission itself was made under the control of the student “soviet coalition” who dictated its orders to the rector. After the rejection of Kaulbars’ request, the “inspection” was carried out by a commission composed of professors and three municipal councillors, and, of course, “nothing suspicious” was discovered.—“Facts of the same nature were also be observed in the Municipal Duma. There, it was the municipal employees who manifested claims to exercise influence and authority”; their committee presented to the Duma, composed of elected representatives, demands “of an essentially political character”; on the 17th, the day of the Manifesto, they concocted a resolution: “At last the Autocracy has fallen into the precipice!”—as the senator writes, “it is not excluded that at the outset of the troubles there might have been inclinations to take the whole of power.”

(After that, it was the revolutionary wave of December, the comminatory tone of the Soviet of Workers’ Deputies

—“we demand” the general strike—the interruption of electric lighting in Odessa, the paralysis of commerce, transport, the activity of the port, bombs were flying again, “the destruction in sets of the new patriotic-oriented newspaper *Rousskaïa retch*[*], “the collection [under threat] of money to finance the revolution”, the cohorts of disaffected high school students and the population frightened “under the yoke of the revolutionary movement.”)

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This spirit of 1905 (the spirit of the whole “liberation movement”), which had manifested itself so violently in Odessa, also broke out in these “constitutional days”[**] in many other cities of Russia; both in and outside the Pale of Settlement, the pogroms “broke out everywhere… on the very day when was received the news of the Proclamation” from the Manifesto.

Within the Pale of Settlement, pogroms were held in Kremenchug, Chemigov, Vinnitsa, Kishinev, Balta, Ekaterinoslav, Elizabethgrad, Oman, and many other towns and villages; the property of the Jews was most often destroyed but not looted. “Where the police and the army took energetic measures, the pogroms remained very limited and lasted only a short time. Thus at Kamenets-Podolsk, thanks to the effective and rapid action of the police and the army, all attempts to provoke a pogrom were stifled in the bud.” “In Chersonese and Nikolayev, the pogrom was stopped from the beginning.”[134] (And, in a south-western town, the pogrom did not take place for the good reason that adult Jews administered a punishment to the young people who had organised an anti-government demonstration after the proclamation of the Imperial Manifesto of 17 October.”[135])

Where, in the Pale of Settlement, there was no single pogrom, it was in the northwest region where the Jews were most numerous, and it might have seemed incomprehensible if the pogroms had been organised by the authorities and “generally proceeded according to the same scenario.”[136]

“Twenty-four pogroms took place outside the Pale of Settlement, but they were directed against all the progressive elements of society,”[137] and not exclusively against the Jews—this circumstance puts in evidence what pushed people to organise pogroms: the shock effect provoked by the Manifesto and a spontaneous impulse to defend the throne against those who wanted to put down the tsar. Pogroms of this type broke out in Rostov-on-the-Don, Tula, Kursk, Kaluga, Voronezh, Riazan, Yaroslav, Viazma, Simferopol, “the Tatars participated actively in the pogroms at Kazan and Feodossia.”[138] In Tver, the building of the Council of the Zemstvo was sacked; at Tomsk the crowd set fire to the theatre where a meeting of the Left took place; two hundred persons perished in the disaster! In Saratov, there were disturbances, but no casualties (the local governor was none other than Stolypin[139]).

On the nature of all these pogroms and the number of their victims, the opinions diverge strongly according to the authors. The estimates that are made today are sometimes very fanciful. For example, in a 1987 publication: “in the course of the pogroms we count a thousand killed and tens of thousands of wounded and maimed”—and, as echoed by the press at the time: “Thousands of women were raped, very often under the eyes of their mothers and children.”[140]

Conversely, G. Sliosberg, a contemporary of the events and with all the information, wrote: “Fortunately, these hundreds of pogroms did not bring about significant violence on the person of the Jews, and in the overwhelming majority of cases the pogroms were not accompanied by murders.”[141] As for the women and the elderly, the rebuttal comes from the Bolshevik fighter Dimanstein, who declared with pride: “Jews who were killed or wounded were for the most part some of the best elements of self-defence, they were young and combative and preferred to die rather than surrender.”[142]

As for the origins of the pogroms, the Jewish community and then the Russian public opinion in 1881 were under the tenacious hold of a hypnosis: undoubtedly and undeniably, the pogroms were manipulated by the government! Petersburg guided by the Police Department! After the events of 1905, the whole press also presented things as such. And Sliosberg himself, in the midst of this hypnosis, abounds in this sense: “For three days, the wave of pogroms has swept over the Pale of Settlement [we have just seen that this area was not touched in full and that, conversely, other

regions of Russia were—A. S.], and according to a perfectly identical scenario, were planned in advance."[143]

And this strange absence, in so many, many authors, if only one would attempt to explain things differently! (Many years later, I. Frumkin acknowledged at least: the pogroms of 1905 were "not only anti-Jewish, but also counter-revolutionary."[144] And no one even asks the question: and if the root causes were the same and should be sought in political events, the state of mind of the population? Are not the same concerns expressed in this way? Let us recall that the crowd had here and there demonstrated against the strikers before the proclamation of the Manifesto. Let us also recall that a general strike of the railways took place in October and that the communications had been interrupted throughout the country—and, in spite of this, so many pogroms broke out at the same time? It should also be noted that the authorities ordered investigations in a whole series of towns and that sanctions were imposed on police officers convicted of breaches of duty. Let us recall that during the same period the peasants organised pogroms against the landowners all over the place, and that they all proceeded in the same way. Without doubt, we are not going to say that these pogroms were also contrived by the Police Department and that they did not reflect the same uneasiness among all the peasants.

It seems that one proof—only one—of the existence of a scheme exists, but it does not point in the direction of power either. The Minister of the Interior R. N. Dournovo discovered in 1906 that an official in charge of special missions, M. S. Komissarov, had used the premises of the Police Department to secretly print leaflets calling for the fight against Jews and revolutionaries.[145] It should be emphasised, however, that this was not an initiative of the Department, but a conspiracy by an adventurer, a former gendarmerie officer, who was subsequently entrusted with "special missions" by the Bolsheviks, to the Cheka, to the GPU, and was sent to the Balkans to infiltrate what remained of the Wrangel army[*].

The falsified versions of events have nonetheless solidly embedded themselves in consciences, especially in the distant regions of the West, where Russia has always been perceived through a thick fog, while anti-Russian propaganda was heard distinctly. Lenin had every interest in inventing the fable according to which tsarism "endeavoured to direct against the Jews the hatred which the workers and peasants, overwhelmed by misery, devoted to the nobles and capitalists"; and his henchman, Lourie-Larine, tried to explain this by class struggle: only the rich Jews would have been targeted—whereas the facts prove the contrary: it was precisely they who enjoyed the protection of the police.[146] But, even today, it is everywhere the same version of the facts—let us take the example of the *Encyclopædia Judaica*: "From the beginning, these pogroms were *inspired* by government circles. The local authorities received *instruction* to give freedom of action to the thugs and to protect them against Jewish detachments of self-defence."[147] Let us take again the *Jewish Encyclopædia* published in Israel in the Russian language: "By organising the pogroms, the Russian authorities sought to…"; "the government *wanted* to physically eliminate as many Jews as possible"[148] [emphasis in italics added everywhere by me—A. S.]. All these events, therefore, would not have been the effect of the criminal laxity of the local authorities, but the fruit of a machination carefully guarded by the central government?

However, Leo Tolstoy himself, who at the time was particularly upset with the government and did not miss an opportunity to speak ill of it, said at the time: "I do not believe that the police push the people [to the pogroms]. This has been said for Kishinev as well as for Baku… It is the brutal manifestation of the popular will… The people see the violence of the revolutionary youth and resist it."[149]

At the tribune of the Duma, Chulguine proposed an explanation similar to that of Tolstoy: "The posse justice is very widespread in Russia as in other countries… What happens in America is rich in lessons regarding this…: posse justice is called lynching… But what has recently happened in Russia is even more terrible—it is the form of posse justice called pogrom! When the power went on strike, when the most inadmissible attacks on the national sentiment and the most sacred values for the people remained completely unpunished, then, under the influence of an unreasoned anger, it began to do justice to itself. It goes without saying that in such circumstances the people are incapable of differentiating between the guilty and the innocent and, in any case, what has happened to us—it has rejected all the fault on the Jews. Of these, few guilty have suffered, for they have been clever enough to escape abroad; it is the innocent who have massively paid for them."[150] (Cadet leader F. Rodichev, for his part, had the following formula: "Anti-Semitism is the patriotism of disoriented people"—let us say: where there are Jews.)

The tsar had been too weak to defend his power by the law, and the government proved its pusillanimity; then the petty *bourgeois*, the petty traders and even the workers, those of the railways, the factories, the very people who had organised the general strike, revolted, stood up in a spontaneous way to defend their most sacred values, wounded by the contortions of those who denigrated them. Uncontrollable, abandoned, desperate, this mass gave free rein to its rage in the barbaric violence of the pogroms.

And in the case of a contemporary Jewish writer who is also lacking in sagacity when he persists in asserting that "undoubtedly, tsarist power played a major role in the organisation of anti-Jewish pogroms", we find in a nearby paragraph: "We are absolutely convinced that the Police Department was not sufficiently organised to implement simultaneous pogroms in six hundred and sixty different places that same week." The responsibility for these pogroms "is not solely and not so much for the administration, but rather for the Russian and Ukrainian population in the Pale of Settlement."[151]

On the latter point, I agree as well. But subject to a reservation, and it is of size: the Jewish youth of this time also carries a heavy share of responsibility in what happened. Here manifested itself a tragic characteristic of the Russian-Ukrainian character (without attempting to distinguish which of the Russians or Ukrainians participated in the pogroms): under the influence of anger, we yield blindly to the need to "blow off some steam" without distinguishing between good and bad; after which, we are not able to take the time—patiently, methodically, for years, if necessary—to repair the damage. The spiritual weakness of our two peoples is revealed in this sudden outburst of vindictive brutality after a long somnolence.

We find the same impotence on the side of the patriots, who hesitate between indifference and semi-approval, unable to make their voice heard clearly and firmly, to guide opinion, to rely on cultural organisations. (Let us note in passing that at the famous meeting at Witte's, there were also representatives of the press of the right, but they did not say a word, they even acquiesced sometimes to Propper's impertinences.)

Another secular sin of the Russian Empire tragically had its effects felt during this period: the Orthodox Church had long since been crushed by the State, deprived of all influence over society, and had no ascendancy over the popular masses (an authority which it had disposed of in ancient Russia and during the time of the Troubles, and which would soon be lacking very much during the civil war!). The highest hierarchs were able to exhort the good Christian people, for months and years, and yet they could not even prevent the crowd from sporting crucifixes and icons at the head of the pogroms.

It was also said that the pogroms of October 1905 had been organised by The Union of the Russian People. This is not true: it did not appear until November 1905, in instinctive reaction to the humiliation felt by the people. Its programme at the time had indeed global anti-Jewish orientations: "The destructive, anti-governmental action of the Jewish masses, solidarity in their hatred for everything Russian and indifferent to the means to be used."[152]

In December, its militants called on the Semienovski regiment to crush the armed insurrection in Moscow. Yet the Union of the Russian People, which was ultimately made legendary by rumours and fears, was in reality only a shabby little party lacking in means whose only *raison d'être* was to lend its support to the autocratic monarch, which, early as the spring of 1906, had become a constitutional monarch. As for the government, it felt embarrassed to have support for such a party. So that the latter, strong of its two or three thousand local soviets composed of illiterates and incompetents, found itself in opposition to the government of the constitutional monarchy, and especially to Stolypin.—From the tribune of the Duma, Purishkevich[*] interrogated in these terms the deputies, "since the appearance of the monarchist organisations, have you seen many pogroms in the Pale of Settlement?… Not one, because the monarchists organisations struggled and struggled against Jewish predominance by economic measures, cultural measures, and not by punches."[153]—These measures were they so cultural, one might ask, but no pogrom is actually known to have been caused by the Union of the Russian People, and those which preceded were indeed the result of a spontaneous popular explosion.

A few years later, the Union of the Russian People—which, from the start, was merely a masquerade—disappeared in the mist of general indifference. (One can judge of the vagueness that surrounded this party by the astonishing

characteristic that is given in the *Jewish Encyclopædia*: the anti-Semitism of the Union of the Russian People "is very characteristic of nobility and great capital"![154])

There is another mark of infamy, all the more indelible as its outlines are vague: "the Black Hundreds."

Where does that name come from? Difficult to say: according to some, this is how the Poles would have designated out of spite the Russian monks who resisted victoriously the assault of the Trinity Lavra of Saint Sergius in 1608–1609. Through obscure historical channels, it reached the twentieth century and was then used as a very convenient label to stigmatise the popular patriotic movement that had spontaneously formed. It was precisely its character, both imprecise and insulting, that made it a success. (Thus, for example, the four KDs who became emboldened to the point of entering into negotiations with Stolypin were denounced as "KD-Black-Hundreds". In 1909, the *Milestones* Collection was accused of "propagating in a masked form the ideology of the Black Hundreds.") And the "expression" became commonplace for a century, although the Slavic populations, totally dismayed and discouraged, were never counted by hundreds but by millions.

In 1908–1912, the *Jewish Encyclopædia* published in Russia, in its honour, did not interfere in giving a definition of the "Black Hundreds": the Jewish intellectual elite of Russia had in its ranks sufficient minds that were balanced, penetrating, and sensible. But during the same period before the First World War, the *Brockhaus-Efron Encyclopædia* proposed a definition in one of its supplements: "The 'Black Hundreds' has been for a few years the common name given to the dregs of society focused on pogroms against Jews and intellectuals." Further, the article broadens the statement: "This phenomenon is not specifically Russian; it appeared on the stage of history… in different countries and at different times."[155] And it is true that, in the press after the February revolution, I found the expression "the Swedish Black Hundreds!"…

A wise contemporary Jewish author rightly points out that "the phenomenon which has been designated by the term 'Black Hundreds' has not been sufficiently studied."[156]

But this kind of scruple is totally foreign to the famous *Encyclopædia Britannica* whose authority extends to the entire planet: "The Black Hundreds or Union of the Russian People or organisation of reactionary and anti-Semitic groups in Russia, constituted during the revolution of 1905. Unofficially encouraged by authorities, the Black Hundreds recruited their troops for the most part from the landowners, the rich peasants, the bureaucrats, the police, and the clergy; they supported the Orthodox Church, autocracy and Russian nationalism. Particularly active between 1906 and 1911…"[157]

One remains stunned before so much science! And this is what is being read to all cultivated humanity: "recruited their troops for the most part from the landowners, the rich peasants, the bureaucrats, the police, and the clergy!" It was thus those people who smashed the windows of the Jewish shops with their sticks! And they were "particularly active" after 1905… when the calm had returned!

True, in 1905–1907 there were actions against landowners, there were even more pogroms against the Jews. It was always the same ignorant and brutal crowd that ransacked and looted houses and property, massacring people (including children), and even cattle; but these massacres never led to condemnation on the part of the progressive intelligentsia, while the deputy in the Duma Herzenstein, in a speech in which he took with passion and reason the defence of small peasant farms, alerting parliamentarians of the danger of an extension of the fires of rural estates, exclaimed: "The illuminations of the month of May last year are not enough for you, when in the region of Saratov one hundred and fifty properties were destroyed practically in a single day?"[158] These illuminations were never forgiven. It was, of course, a blunder on his part, from which it should not be inferred that he was glad of such a situation. Would he have used this word, however, about the pogroms against the Jews of the preceding autumn?

It was not until the Great, the real revolution, that the violence against the noble landlords was heard, they "were no less barbaric and unacceptable than the pogroms against the Jews… There is, however, in the left-wing circles a tendency to consider… as positive the destruction of the old political and social system."[159]

Yes, there was another frightening similarity between these two forms of pogroms: the sanguinary crowd had the feeling of being *in its right.*

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The last pogroms against the Jews took place in 1906 in Sedlets, in Poland—which is beyond our scope—and in Bialystok during the summer. (Soon after, the police stifled a pogrom in preparation in Odessa after the dissolution of the first Duma.)

In Bialystok was constituted the most powerful of the anarchist groups in Russia. Here, "important bands of anarchists had made their appearance; they perpetrated terrorist acts against owners, police officers, Cossacks, military personnel."[160] The memories left by some of them make it possible to represent the atmosphere of the city very clearly in 1905–1906: repeated attacks by the anarchists who had settled in the Street de Souraje, where the police did not dare go any more. "It was very common for policemen on duty to be assassinated in broad daylight; This is why we saw fewer and fewer of them…" Here is the anarchist Nissel Farber: "he threw a bomb at the police station," wounding two peacekeepers, a secretary, killing "two *bourgeois* who were there by chance," and, lack of luck, perished himself in the explosion. Here is Guelinker (a.k.a. Aron Eline): he also launched a bomb, which seriously wounded the deputy of the chief of police, a commissioner, two inspectors and three agents. Here is another anarchist whose bomb "wounds an officer and three soldiers," hurts him as well, in fact, "and, unfortunately, kills a militant of the Bund." Here again it is a commissioner and a peacekeeper who are killed, there are two gendarmes, and again the same "Guelinker kills a concierge." (Apart from the attacks, the "expropriation of consumer products" was also practised—food had to be eaten.) "The authorities lived in fear of an 'uprising' of the anarchists in the Street de Souraje," the police had taken the habit of "expecting such an uprising for today, tomorrow or the day after tomorrow." "The majority… of the anarchists… were leaning towards a resolute armed action in order to maintain, as much as possible, an atmosphere of class war."

To this end, terror was also extended to the Jewish "*bourgeois*". The same Farber attacked the head of a workshop, a certain Kagan, "at the exit of the synagogue… he wounded him seriously with a knife in the neck"; another little patron, Lifchitz, suffered the same fate; also "the wealthy Weinreich was attacked in the synagogue," but the revolver was of poor quality and jammed three times." There was a demand for a series of "significant 'gratuitous' actions against the *bourgeois*: "the *bourgeois* must feel himself in danger of death at every moment of his existence." There was even the idea of "disposing all along [the main street of Bialystok] infernal machines to blow up the entire upper class" at once. But "how to transmit the *anarchist* 'message'?" Two currents emerged in Bialystok: the "gratuitous" terrorists and the "communards" who considered terrorism to be a "dull" and mediocre method, but tended towards the armed insurrection "in the name of communism without State": "To invest in the city, to arm the masses, to resist several attacks by the army and then to drive them out of the city," and, "at the same time, to invest in plants, factories and shops." It was in these terms that, "during meetings of fifteen to twenty thousand people, our speakers called for an armed uprising." Alas, "the working masses of Bialystok having withdrawn from the revolutionary vanguard that they themselves had suckled from," it was imperative to "overcome… the passivity of the masses." The anarchists of Bialystok thus prepared an insurrection in 1906. Its course and its consequences are known as the "pogrom of Bialystok". [161]

It all began with the assassination of the chief of police, which took place precisely in this "Street de Souraje where the Jewish anarchist organisation was concentrated"; then someone shot or threw a bomb on a religious procession. After that, a commission of inquiry was dispatched by the State Duma, but alas, alas, three times alas, it failed to determine "whether it was a shot or some sort of whistling: witnesses were unable to say."[162] This, the communist Dimanstein wrote very clearly, twenty years later, that "a firecracker was thrown at an Orthodox procession as a provocation."[163]

Nor can one exclude the participation of the Bund who, during the "best" months of the 1905 revolution, had burned with a desire to move to armed action, but in vain, and was withering away to the point of having to consider renewing allegiance to the Social democrats. But it is of course the anarchists of Bialystok themselves who manifested

themselves with the most brilliance. Their leader, Judas Grossman-Rochinin, recounted after 1917 what this nest of anarchists was: above all, they were afraid of "yielding to a wait-and-see approach and to common sense". Having failed in organising two or three strikes because of the lack of support from the population, they decided in June 1906 to "take charge of the city" and expropriate the tools of production. "We considered that there was no reason to withdraw from Bialystok without having given a last class struggle, that it would have come down to capitulating in front of a complex problem of a superior type"; if "we do not move to the ultimate stage of the struggle, the masses will lose confidence [in us]." However, men and weapons were lacking to take the city, and Grossman ran to Warsaw to seek help from the armed fraction of the PPS (the Polish Socialists). And there he heard a newsagent shouting: "Bloody pogrom in Bialystok!… thousands of victims!"… Everything became clear: the reaction had preceded us!"[164]

And it is there, in the passage "to the ultimate stage of the struggle", that is doubtlessly found the explanation for the "pogrom". The revolutionary impetus of the Bialystok anarchists was expressed subsequently. At the trial, in the pleadings of the lawyer Gillerson who "called for the overthrow of the government and the political and social system existing in Russia", and which, for precisely this reason, was himself prosecuted. As for the Duma commission, it considered that "the conditions of a pogrom had also been created by various elements of society who imagined that fighting the Jews was tantamount to fighting the liberation movement."[165]

But after that "firecracker thrown by the provocation" which the Duma Committee had not been able to detect, what had been the course of events? According to the commission's findings, "the systematic execution of innocent Jews, including women and children, was carried out under the pretext of repressing the revolutionaries." There were "more than seventy dead and about eighty wounded" among the Jews. Conversely, "the indictment tended to explain the pogrom by the revolutionary activity of the Jews, which had provoked the anger of the rest of the population." The Duma Committee rejected this version of the facts: "There was no racial, religious, or economic antagonism in Bialystok between Jews and Christians."[166]

And here is what is written today: "This time the pogrom was purely military. The soldiers were transformed into rioters," and chased the revolutionaries. At the same time, these soldiers were said to be afraid of the detachments of Jewish anarchists in the Street de Souraje, because "the war in Japan… had taught [Russian soldiers] to beware of gunshots"—such were the words pronounced in the Municipal Duma by a Jewish councillor.[167] Against the Jewish detachments of self-defence are given the infantry and the cavalry, but, on the other side, there are bombs and firearms.

In this period of strong social unrest, the Duma committee concluded to a "strafing of the population", but twenty years later, we can read in a Soviet book (in any case, the "old regime" will not come back, will not be able to justify itself, and so we can go ahead!): "They massacred entire families with the use of nails, they pierced their eyes, cut tongues, smashed the skulls of children, etc."[168] And a luxury book edited abroad, sensationalist book, denunciatory, a richly illustrated folio, printed on coated paper, entitled *The Last Autocrat* (decreeing in advance that Nicholas II would indeed be the "last"), proposed the following version: the pogrom "had been the object of such a staging that it seemed possible to describe the program of the first day in the Berlin newspapers; thus, two hours before the beginning of the Bialystok pogrom, the Berliners could be informed of the event."[169] (But if something appeared in the Berlin press, was it not merely an echo of Grossman-Rochin's shenanigans?)

Moreover, it would have been rather absurd on the part of the Russian government to provoke pogroms against the Jews even as the Russian ministers were lobbying among Western financiers in the hope of obtaining loans. Let us remember that Witte had great difficulty in obtaining from the Rothschilds, who were ill-disposed towards Russia because of the situation of the Jews and the pogroms, "as well as other important Jewish establishments,"[170] with the exception of the Berliner banker Mendelssohn. As early as December 1905, the Russian ambassador to London, Benkendorf, warned his minister: "The Rothschilds are repeating everywhere… That Russia's credit is now at its lowest level, but that it will be restored immediately if the Jewish question is settled."[171]

At the beginning of 1906, Witte disseminated a government communiqué saying that "finding a radical solution to the Jewish problem is a matter of conscience for the Russian people, and this will be done by the Duma, but even before the Duma unites itself, the most stringent provisions will be repealed insofar as they are no longer justified in the present

[172]

situation." He begged the most eminent representatives of the Jewish community of Saint Petersburg to go as a delegation to the tsar, and he promised them the most kind welcome. This proposal was discussed at the Congress of the Union for the Integrality of Rights—and after the fiery speech of I. B. Bak (editor of the *Retch* newspaper) it was decided to reject it and to send a less important delegation to Witte, not to provide answers, but to make accusations: to tell him "clearly and unambiguously" that the wave of pogroms was organised "at the initiative and with the support of the government."[173]

After two years of revolutionary earthquake, the leaders of the Jewish community in Russia who had taken the upper hand did not for a moment contemplate accepting a progressive settlement regarding the question of equal rights. They felt that they were carried by the wave of victory and had no need to go to the tsar in the position of beggars and loyal subjects. They were proud of the audacity displayed by the Jewish revolutionary youth. (One must position oneself in the context of the time when the old imperial army was believed to be immovable, to perceive the significance of the episode during which, in front of the regiment of Rostov grenadiers standing at attention, his commander, Colonel Simanski, had been *arrested* by a volunteer Jew!) After all, perhaps these revolutionaries had not been guilty of "national treason," as Doubnov had accused them, perhaps they were the ones who were in the truth?—After 1905, only the fortunate and prudent Jews were left to doubt it.

What was the record of the year 1905 for the entire Jewish community in Russia? On the one hand, "the revolution of 1905 had overall positive results… it brought to the Jews political equality even when they did not even enjoy civil equality… Never as after the "Liberation Movement" did the Jewish question benefit from a more favourable climate in public opinion."[174] But, on the other hand, the strong participation of the Jews in the revolution contributed to the fact that they were henceforth all identified with it. At the tribune of the Duma in 1907 V. Choulgin proposed to vote a resolution to find that "… the western half of Russia, from Bessarabia to Warsaw, is full of hatred towards the Jews whom they consider the responsible for all their misfortunes…"[175]

This is indirectly confirmed by the increase in Jewish emigration from Russia. If, in 1904–1905, there was still an increase in emigration among mature men, the whole age pyramid is concerned from 1906 onwards. The phenomenon is therefore not due to the pogroms of 1881–1882, but indeed those of 1905–1906. From now on, for the United States alone, the number of immigrants rose to 125,000 people in 1905–1906 and to 115,000 in 1906–1907.[176]

But at the same time, writes B. I. Goldman, "in the short years of agitation, higher education institutions did not rigorously apply the *numerus clausus* to the Jews, a relatively large number of Jewish professional executives, and as they were more skilful than the Russians in placing themselves on the market, without always being distinguished by a great moral rigour in their activity, some began to speak of a "hold of the Jews" on the intellectual professions.[177] And "in the 'Project for Universities' prepared in 1906 by the Ministry of Public Instruction, no mention was made to the *numerus clausus*." In 1905 there were 2,247 (9.2%) Jewish students in Russia; in 1906, 3,702 (11.6%); In 1907, 4,266 (12%).[178]

In the program of reforms announced on August 25th, 1906 by the Government, the latter undertook to re-examine, among the limitations to which the Jews were subjected, those which could be immediately lifted "insofar as they merely provoke dissatisfaction and are obviously obsolete."

However, at the same time, the Russian government could no longer be affected by the revolution (which was prolonged for another two years by a wave of terrorism hardly contained by Stolypin) and by the very visible participation of the Jews in this revolution.

To these subjects of discontent was added the humiliating defeat against Japan, and the ruling circles of Saint Petersburg yielded to the temptation of a simplistic explanation: Russia is fundamentally sound, and the whole revolution, from beginning to end, is a dark plot hatched by the Jews, an episode of the Judeo-Masonic plot. Explain everything by one and the same cause: the Jews! Russia would long have been at the zenith of glory and universal power if there were no Jews!

And, clinging to this short but convenient explanation, the high spheres only brought the hour of their fall even

closer.

The superstitious belief in the historical force of conspiracies (even if they exist, individual or collective) leaves completely aside the main cause of failures suffered by individuals as well as by states: human weaknesses.

It is our Russian weaknesses that have determined the course of our sad history—the absurdity of the religious schism caused by Nikon[*], the senseless violence of Peter the Great and the incredible series of counter-shocks that ensued, wasting our strength for causes that are not ours, the inveterate sufficiency of the nobility and bureaucratic petrification throughout the nineteenth century. It is not by the effect of a plot hatched from the outside that we have abandoned our peasants to their misery. It was not a plot that led the great and cruel Petersburg to stifle the sweet Ukrainian culture. It was not because of a conspiracy that four ministries were unable to agree on the assignment of a particular case to one or the other of them, they spent years in exhausting squabbles mobilising all levels of the hierarchy. It is not the result of a plot if our emperors, one after the other, have proved incapable of understanding the evolution of the world and defining the true priorities. If we had preserved the purity and strength, which were formerly infused into us by Saint Sergius of Radonezh, we should not fear any plot in the world.

No, it can not be said in any case that it was the Jews who "organised" the revolutions of 1905 or 1917, just as one cannot say that it was this nation as a whole that fomented them. In the same way, it was not the Russians or the Ukrainians, taken together as nations, who organised the pogroms.

It would be easy for us all to take a retrospective look at this revolution and condemn our "renegades." Some were "non-Jewish Jews,"[179] others were "internationalists, not Russians." But every nation must answer for its members in that it has helped to train them.

On the side of the Jewish revolutionary youth (but also of those who had formed it) as well as those of the Jews who "constituted an important revolutionary force,"[180] it seems that the wise advice Jeremiah addressed to the Jews deported to Babylon was forgotten: "Seek peace for the city where I have deported you; pray to Yahweh in its favour, for its peace depends on yours." (Jeremiah 29–7.)

While the Jews of Russia, who rallied the revolution, only dreamed of bringing down this same city without thinking of the consequences.

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In the long and chaotic human history, the role played by the Jewish people—few but energetic—is undeniable and considerable. This also applies to the history of Russia. But for all of us, this role remains a historical enigma.

For the Jews as well.

This strange mission brought them everything but happiness.

Footnotes

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2. *V. Jabotinsky*, V traournye dni (Days of Mourning), Felietony, Saint Petersburg, Tipografia "Guerold", 1913, p. 25.
3. *M. Krohl*, Kishinovsky pogrom 1903 goda Kishinëvskiy pogromnyi protsess (The Kishinev pogrom of 1903), BJWR-2, New York, 1944, p. 377.
4. *Ibidem.*
5. *S. Dimanstein*, Revoloutsionnoïe dvijenie sredi ievreyev (The revolution-Saint Petersburg, 1905: Istoria rcvoloutsionnovo dvijenia v otdelnykh otcherkakh (History of the Revolutionary Movement—abbreviated: "1905") / pod redaktskiei M. N. Pokrovskovo, vol. 3, vyp. 1, M. L., 1927, p. 150.
6. *N. A. Buchbinder*, Ivrevskoye rabotchee dvijenie v Gomele (1890–1905) (The Jewish Workers' Movement in Gomel [1890–1905]), Krasnaya lelopis: Istoritcheskii journal, Pg., 1922, nos. 2–3, pp. 65–69.

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9. *Ibidem*, pp. 3041–3043.
10. *Ibidem*, p. 3041.
11. *Ibidem*, pp. 3043–3046.
12. *Buchbinder, op. cit.*, p. 69.
13. *L. Praisman*, Pogromy i samooborona (The pogroms and self-defence), "22": Obchtchestvenno-polititcheskii literatoumyi newspaper Ivreiskoi intelligentsii iz SSSR v Izraele, Tel Aviv, 1986–1987, no. 51, p. 178.
14. From the minouvehikh dnei: Zapiski ruskovo ievreia (Things of the past: memories of a Russian Jew), V 3-kh t. Paris, 1933–1934. t. 3, pp. 78–79.
15. *Ibidem*, p. 77.
16. Delo o gomelskom pogrom (Kiev courthouse: the Gomel pogrom case), *op. cit.*, p. 3040.
17. JE, t. 6, p. 666.
18. *Sliosberg*, t. 3, pp. 78–87.
19. JE, t. 6, p. 667.
20. *I. G. Froumkine*, Iz istorii ruskovo ievreïstva—(Sb.) Kniga o rousskom cvrcïve: Ot 1860 godov do Revolutsii 1917 g. (Aspects of the History of Russian Jews), in BJWR-1, p. 61.
21. *F. R. Dulles*, The Road to Tehran: The Story of Russia and America, 1781–1943, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1944, pp. 88–89.
22. *S. I. Witte*, Vospominania. Tsarstvovanie Nikolaïa (Memoirs, The Reign of Nicholas II). In 2 vols., Berlin, Slovo, 1922, t. 1, pp. 376, 393.
23. *T. Dennett*, Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War, Doubleday, Page and Company, 1925 (reprinted: Gloucester, Mass., Peter Smith, 1959), p. 2.
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25. JE, t. 16, p. 41.
26. Encyclopædia Judaica, vol. 14, Jerusalem, Keter Publishing House, Ltd., 1971, p. 961.
27. *A. Davydov*, Vospominania, 1881–1955 (Memoirs, 1881–1955), Paris, 1982.
28. *Witte*, Memoirs, *op. cit.*, t. 2, pp. 286–287.
29. *Sliosberg*, t. 3, pp. 97, 100–101.
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31. *Sliosberg*, t. 2, p. 190.
32. JE, t. 5, pp. 671, 864.
33. *Frumkin, op. cit.*, BJWR-1, pp. 64, 109–110.
34. *A. N. Kouropatkine*, Zadatchi ruskko armii (The Problems of the Russian Army), Saint Petersburg, 1910, t. 3, pp. 344–345.
35. JE, t. 2, pp. 239–240.
36. Kievlianine, 16 Dec. 1905—*V. V. Choulguine*, "Chto nam v nikh ne nravitsa…" Ob Antisemilizm v Rossii ("What we do not like about them…" On Anti-Semitism in Russia), Paris, 1929, annexes, p. 308.
37. JE, t. 5, pp. 705–707.
38. *Ibidem*, t. 3, pp. 168–169.
39. *A. I. Denikine*, Pout rousskovo ofitsera (The Routine of a Russian Officer), New York, ed. Imeni Chekhov, 1953, p. 285.
40. JE, t. 3, p. 169.
41. *Witte, op. cit.*, t. 1, pp. 394–395.
42. B'nai B'rith News, May 1920, vol. XII, no. 9.
43. *Witte, op. cit.*, p. 401.

- Organ of the Union for Liberation, organisation of the liberal opposition, which became the Constitutional-Democratic Party (or KD, or Cadet) in 1905.

44. *G. I. Aronson*, V borbe za grajdanskie i natsionalnye prava: Obchtchestvennye tetchenia v rousskom evreïstve (The struggle for civil and national rights: The movements of opinion within the Jewish community of Russia), BJWR-1, pp. 221–222.
45. *M. L. Vichnitser*, Iz peterbourgskikh vospominanii (Memories of Petersburg), BJWR-1, p. 41.
46. *S. Ivanovich*, Ievrei i sovetskaya diktatoura (The Jews and the Soviet Dictatorship), pp. 41–42.

- Jewish mutual aid committee

47. *Sliosberg*, t. 3, pp. 132, 248–249.
48. *Ibidem*, pp. 138, 168.

49. *Ibidem*, pp. 142–147, 152–157.
50. *M. Krohl*, Stranitsy moiei jisni (Pages of my life), t. 1, New York, 1944, pp. 299–300.
51. JE, t. 14, p. 515.
52. RJE, t. 3, M., 1997, p. 65.
53. JE, t. 14, p. 515.
54. *Aronson*, The Struggle…, *op. cit.*, p. 222.
55. *Sliosberg*, t. 3, pp. 170–171.
    - Jewish elementary schools

56. *Ibidem*, p. 170.
57. JE, t. 14, p. 516.
58. *Ibidem*, t. 7, pp. 437–440.
59. *Sliosberg*, t. 3, pp. 257–258.
60. JE, t. 14. p. 517.
61. *Aronson*, The Struggle…, *op. cit.*, p. 224.
62. *D. S. Pasmanik*, Chevo je my dobivaïemsia? (What do we really want?), Rossia i Ievrei, Sb 1 (Russia and the Jews, book 1—later: RJ) / Otetchestvennoïe obedinenie rousskikh ievreyev za granitsei, Paris, YMCA Press, 1978, p. 211.
63. *Aronson*, The Struggle…, *op. cit.*, p. 224.

- After the dissolution of the first Duma, about two hundred deputies met at Vyborg, and expressed their opposition to the government in the form of a manifesto, which did not meet with any public echo.

64. *G. Svet*, Rousskie evrei v sionizme i v stroitelstve Palestiny i Izrailia (Russian Jews in Zionism and the Construction of Palestine and Israel), BJWR-1, pp. 263–264.
65. *V. Jabotinsky*, levreiskaya kramola (The Jewish Conspiracy), Felietony, p. 43.
66. *Sliosberg*, t. 3, pp. 253, 255, 262.
67. *Ibidem*, pp. 225–256.

- Teachers teaching in *heders*.

68. *Ibidem*, p. 258.
69. *Ibidem*, p. 263.
70. *Ibidem*, p. 265.
71. *Krohl*, Stanitsy… (Pages…), *op. cit.*, pp. 283–284.

- Social Revolutionaries.
    72. *D. Schub*, Evrei rousskoï revolutsii (The Jews in the Russian Revolution), JW-2, p. 138.
    - Chief of the Russian secret police at the beginning of the twentieth century.
        - Minister of the Interior assassinated in 1902.
        73. SJE, t. 2, p. 111.
            - Politician with revolutionary ideas, very influential with the emperors Alexander and Nicolas II (1827–1907).

74. RJE, t. 3, pp. 378–379.

- P. Dournovo (1845–1915), Minister of the Interior in 1905–1906; P. Shuvalov (1830–1906), Russian diplomat and politician; D. Trepov (1855–1906), Deputy Minister of the Interior, one of the leaders of the repression of the revolution of 1905–1907.
    - G. Gapon (1870–1906), priest and agent of the secret police, one of the persons responsible for the massacre of demonstrators in Saint Petersburg, 9 January 1905.
    75. RJE, t. 2, p. 517.
        - Zagorsk.
            - Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party.

76. RJE, t. 1, pp. 436, 468; t. 2, pp. 13, 218.
77. SJE, t. 1, p. 124.
78. *A. Vetlouguine*, Avanturisly Grajdanskoy voïny (Adventurers of the Civil War), Paris, Imprimerie Zemgor, 1921, pp. 65–67, 85.
79. *I. Grossman-Rochin*, Doumy o bylom (Reflections on the Past) (Iz istorii Belostotskovo, anarkhitcheskovo, "tchemosnamenskovo" dvijenia), Byloïe, M., 1924, nos. 27–28, p. 179.
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- See *infra*, Chapter 10.

81. SJE, t. 7, p. 398.
82. *Dimanstein*, "1905*", *op. cit.*, t. 3, v. 1, p. 174.
83. Mejdounarodnoïe finansovoïë polojenie tsarskoi Rossii vo vremia mirovoï voïny (The financial situation of tsarist Russia during the World War), Krasnyi Arkhiv, 1934, t. 64, p. 28.
84. Retch, 1917, 25 March, p. 6.
85. *Dimanstein*, "1905", *op. cit.*, p. 175.
86. JE, t. 7, p. 370.
87. Doklad direktora departamenta politsii Lopoukhina ministrou vnoutrennykh del o sobytiakh 9-vo ianvaria (Report of the Director of the Police Department, Lopoukhine, to the Minister of the Interior on the events of 9 January), Krasnaya Ictopis, 1922, no. 1, p. 333.
88. V Nevsky, Ianvarskie dni v Peterbourgue v 1905 godou (The Days of January in Petersburg in 1905), *ibidem*, pp. 51, 53.
89. Soblazn Sotsializma, p. 329.
90. RJE, t. 2, p. 70.
91. *Dimanstein*, "1905", *op. cit.*, p. 144.
92. *N. Buchbinder*, 9 ianvaria i icvskoye rabotchee dvijenie (On 9 January and Jewish Labour Movement), Krasnaya Letopis, 1922, no. 1, pp. 81–87.
93. *Dimanstein*, "1905", *op. cit.*, pp. 145, 147.
94. *Ibidem*, pp. 150–151.
95. *Ibidem*, pp. 123–124.
96. SJE, t. 2, p. 513.
97. *Dimanstein*, "1905", *op. cit.*, p. 144.
98. JE, t. 7, p. 602.
99. SJE, t. 2, p. 513.
100. *Ibidem*, t. 6, p. 566.
101. Pravo, 5 May 1905, pp. 1483–1484.
102. SJE, t. 2, p. 513; *Dimanstein*, "1905", *op. cit.*, pp. 151–152.
103. *Dimanstein*, "1905", *op. cit.*, p. 153.
104. *Ibidem*, p. 164.

- A. Boulyguine (1851–1919). Minister of the Interior in 1905.

105. *Ibidem*, pp. 165–166.
106. *Ibidem*, pp. 167–168.
107. *Ibidem*, pp. 173–175.
108. *Ibidem*, pp. 177–178.
109. JE, t. 5, pp. 99–100.
110. SJE, t. 1, p. 560.
111. Manifest 17 oktiabria (Dokoumenry) (The Manifesto of 17 October [documents]), Krasnyi arkhiv, 1925, t. 11–12, pp. 73, 89.
112. SJE, t. 7, p. 349.
113. *Sliosberg*, t. 3, p. 175.
114. Manifest 17 oktiabria (The Manifesto of 17 October), *op. cit.*, pp. 99–105.
115. *Witte*, Memoirs, *op. cit.*, t. 2, pp. 52–54.
116. Kievlianin, 1905, no. 305: *Choulguine**, annexes, *op. cit.*, pp. 271–274.
117. Vseppodaneïchiï ottchët o proizvedennom senatorom Tourau izsledovanii pritchin besporiadkov, byvehikh v gor. Kicvc (Report of Senator Tourau on the causes of the disorders in the city of Kiev), Materialy k istorii rousskoi kontr-revolutsii, t. 1. Pogromy po olitsialnym dokoumentam, Saint Petersburg, 1908, pp. 203–296.
118. SJE, t. 6, p. 567.

- See *infra*, Chapter 10.

119. Kievlianin, 1905, nos. 290, 297, 311, 317, 358, in *Choulguine*, annexes, *op. cit.*, pp. 286–302.
120. Vseppodanischi ottehel senatora Kuzminskovo o pritchinakh bezporiadkov, proiskhodivehikh v r. Odcssc v oktiabre 1905 g., Io poriadke deïstvi m mestnykh vlaslei (Report by Senator Kouzminski on the causes of the disorders in the city of Odessa in October 1905 and on the actions carried out by the local authorities), Kievskii i odcsskii pogromy v ottehetakh senatorov Tourau i Kouzminskovo. SPb., Letopissets, (1907), pp. 111–220.
121. Odesskii pogrom i samooborona (The Odessa pogrom and self-defence), Paris, Zapadnyi Tsentralnyi Komitet Samooborony Poalei Zion, 1906, pp. 50–52.

122. *V. Jabotinsky*, Vvedenic (Preface), in K. N. Bialik. Pesni i poemy, *op. cit.*, p. 44.
123. *D. Aizman*, Iskouchenie (Temptation), Rousskaïa volia, 29 April 1917, pp. 2–3.
124. *Praisman*, in "22", *op. cit.*, p. 179.
125. Gossudarstvennaya Duma—Vtoroy Sozyv (The Duma of Elai—second convocation), Slenogralitcheskiï ollchel, p. 2033.
126. Odesskiï pogrom… (The pogrom of Odessa), Poalei Zion. pp. 64–65.
127. *Ibidem*, p. 53.
128. The Kievlianin, 14 Nov. 1905, in *Choulguine*, annexes, *op. cit.*, pp. 303–308.
129. Odesskiï pogrom… (The pogrom of Odessa), Poalei Zion, pp. 53–54.
130. SJE, t. 6, p. 122.
131. Odesskiï pogrom… (Le pogrom d'Odessa), Poalei Zion, pp. 63–64.
132. *Dimanstein*, in "1905", t. 3, v. 1, p. 172.
133. *Choutguine*, Annexes, p. 292.

- "The Russian Word"
    - Because of the proclamation of the Manifesto modifying the Russian regime.

134. Report of Senator Kouzminski, pp. 176–178.
135. Report of Senator Tourau, p. 262.
136. SJE, t. 6, p. 566.
137. *Ibidem.*
138. JE, t. 12, pp. 620–622.
139. *I. L. Teitel*, Iz moiii jizni za 40 let (Memories of 40 years of my life), Paris, 1925, pp. 184–186.
140. *Praisman*, in "22", 1986/87, no. 51, p. 183.
141. *Sliosberg*, t. 3, p. 180.
142. *Dimanstein*, t. 3, p.172.
143. *Sliosberg*, t. 3, p. 177.
144. *Frumkin*, BJWR-1, p. 71.
145. Retch, 1906, 5 May.

- One of the main components of the White Army.

146. *I. Larme*, Ievrei i antisemitizm v SSSR (The Jews and Anti-Semitism in the USSR), M.-L. 1929, pp. 36, 292.
147. Encyclopædia Judaica, vol. 13, p. 698.
148. SJE, t. 6, p. 568.
149. D. P. Makovitsky, 1905–1906 v Iasnoi Poliane (1905–1906 in Yasnaya Poliana), Golos minovehevo. M., 1923, no. 3, p. 26.
150. Second Duma, shorthand for the debates, 12 March 1907, p. 376.
151. *Praisman*, in "22", 1986–87, no. 51, pp. 183, 186–187.
152. Novoie vremia, 1905, 20 Nov. (3 Dec), pp. 2–3.

- V. Purishkevich (1870–1920), one of the leaders of the Russian extreme right.

153. Stenographic Record of the Third Duma, 1911, p. 3118.
154. JE, t. 14, p. 519.
155. Entsiklopcditcheskii slovar, Spb., Brockhaus i Efron. Dopoln, t. 2 (4 / d), 1907, p. 869.
156. Boris Orlov, Rossia bez evrcev (Russia without the Jews), "22", 1988, no. 60, p. 151.
157. Encyclopædia Britannica. 15th ed., 1981, vol. II, p. 62, cl. 2.
158. Proceedings of the First Duma, May 19th 1906, p. 524.
159. *I. O. Levine*, Evrei v revolutsii (The Jews in the Revolution), RaJ, p. 135.
160. *Dimanstein*, t. 3, p. 163.
161. Iz istorii anarkhitcheskovo dvijenia v Bialystoka (Aspects of the history of the anarchist movement in Bialystok), Soblazn sotsializma, pp. 417–432.
162. JE, t. 5, pp. 171–172.
163. *Dimanslein*, t. 3, p. 180.
164. *Grossman-Rochtchine*, Byloïe, 1924, nos. 27–28. pp. 180–182.
165. JE, t. 5, pp. 171–174.
166. *Ibidem*, pp. 170. 172.
167. *Praisman*, pp. 185–186.
168. *Dimanstein*, t. 3, p. 180.

169. Der Leizte russischc Allcinherrscher, Berlin, Eberhard Frowein Verlag (1913), p. 340.
170. *A. Popov*, Zaem 1906 g. V Donesseniakh ruskovo posla v Parije (The loan of 1906 through the despatches of the Russian ambassador to Paris), Krasnyy arkhiv, 1925, t. 11/12, p. 432.
171. K peregovoram Kokovtseva o zaïme v 1905–1906 gg. (The Kokovtsev Talks for Borrowing), Krasnyy arkhiv, 1925, t. 10, p. 7.
172. Perepiska N.A. Romanova i P.A. Solypina (Correspondence between N. A. Romanov and P. A. Stolypin). Krasnyi Arkhiv, 1924, t. 5, p. 106.
173. *Sliosberg*, t. 3, pp. 185–188.
174. *G. A. Landau*, Revolutsionnye idei v ievreïskoi obchtchcstvennosti (Revolutionary ideas in Jewish opinion). RaJ, p. 116.
175. Stenographic Record of Debates at the Second Duma, 6 March 1907, p. 151.
176. JE, t. 2, pp. 235–236; SJE, t. 6, p. 568.
177. *B. I. Goldman* (B. Gorev), Icvrci v proizvedcniakh rousskikh pissatelei (The Jews in Russian Literature), Pd. Svobodnoïe slovo, 1917, p. 28.
178. SJE, t. 7, p. 348.
    - Patriarch of the Russian Church, who in the seventeenth century wished to impose by force a reform of liturgical texts and ritual, which gave rise to the schism of the “old believers”.
179. See, for example, *Paul Johnson*, A History of the Jews, Harper Collins, 1987, p. 448.
180. SJE, t. 7, p. 349.

Chapter 10

The Period of the Duma

The Manifesto of 17 October marked the beginning of a qualitatively new period in Russian history, which was later consolidated by a year of Stolypin's government: the period of the Duma or of limited Autocracy, during which the previous principles of government—the absolute power of the tsar, the opacity of the ministries, the immutability of the hierarchy—were rapidly and sensibly restricted. This period was very difficult for all the *higher spheres*, and only men with a solid character and an active temperament could enrol with dignity in the new era. But public opinion also found it difficult to get accustomed to the new electoral practices, to the publicity of the debates in the Duma (and even more to the responsibility of the latter); and, in its left wing, the enraged Leninists as well as the enraged of the Bund simply boycotted the elections to the first Duma: we have nothing to do with your parliaments, we will achieve our ends by bombs, blood, convulsions! And so "the attitude of the Bund towards the Jewish deputies of the Duma was violently hostile."[1]

But the Jews of Russia, led by the Union for the integrality of rights, were not mistaken and, expressing their sympathy for the new institution, "participated very actively in the elections, voting most often for the representatives of the [Cadet] party who had placed the equality of rights for the Jews on its agenda." Some revolutionaries who had regained their spirits shared the same dispositions. Thus Isaac Gurvitch, who had emigrated in 1889—an active supporter of the Marxist left, was the co-founder of the American Social-Democratic Party—, returned to Russia in 1905, where he was elected to the Duma Electoral College.[2]—There were no limitations on the Jews in the elections, and twelve of them sat in the first Duma; it was true that most of them came from the Pale of Settlement, while the Jewish leaders of the capital, who did not have the property qualifications, could not be elected: only Winaver, L. Bramson[3], and the converted Jew M. Herzenstein (to whom Prince P. Dolgorukov had given his place).

As the number of Jews in the Duma was significant, the Zionist deputies proposed forming an "independent Jewish group" abiding by "the discipline of a real political party", but the non-Zionist deputies rejected this idea, contenting itself "to meet from time to time to discuss matters of direct concern to Jewish interests,"[4] agreeing however, to comply already to "a genuine discipline in the sense of strictly abiding by the decisions of a college composed of members of the Duma and those of the Committee for the integrality of rights"[5] (the "Political Bureau").

At the same time a solid alliance was formed between the Jews and the Cadet party. "It was not uncommon for the local chapters of the Union [for the integrality of rights] and the constitutional-democratic party to be composed of the same people."[6] (Some teased Winaver by calling him the "Mosaic Cadet".) "In the Pale of Settlement, the overwhelming majority of the [Cadet] party members were Jews; in the interior provinces, they represented in number the second nationality… As Witte wrote, 'almost all Jews who graduated from higher education joined the party of People's Freedom [that is, The Cadets]… which promised them immediate access to equal rights.' This party owes much of its influence on the Jews who provided it with both intellectual and material support."[7] The Jews "introduced coherence and rigour… into the Russian 'Liberation Movement' of 1905."[8]

However, A. Tyrkova, an important figure in the Cadet party, notes in his memoirs that "the chief founders and leaders of the Cadet party were not Jews. There were not, among the latter, any personality sufficiently prominent to drive the Russian liberals behind it, as the Jew Disraeli had done for the English Conservatives in the middle of the nineteenth century… The people that mattered most within the Cadet party were Russians. This does not mean that I deny the influence of these Jews who have joined our masses. They could not fail to act upon us, if only by their inexhaustible energy. Their very presence, their activity, did not allow us to forget them, to forget their situation, to forget that they had to be helped." And, further on: "Reflecting on all these networks of influence of the Jews [within the Cadet party], one cannot overlook the case of Miliukov. From the beginning, he became their favourite, surrounded by a circle of admirers, more precisely feminine admirers… who cradled him in muted melodies, cajoled him, covered him without restraint of praise so excessive that they were comical."[9]

V. A. Obolensky, also a member of the party, describes a Cadet club during the time of the First Duma at the corner of Sergevskaya and Potmekinskaya streets. The elite of the secularised Jewish society and the elite of the Russian politicised intelligentsia were mingled: “There were always a lot of people, and the public, composed mostly of wealthy Jewish Petersburgers, was very elegant: the ladies wore silk robes, shiny brooches and rings, the gentlemen had the airs of well-nourished and self-satisfied *bourgeois*. Despite our democratic convictions, we were somewhat shocked by the atmosphere that prevailed in this ‘Cadet club’. One can imagine the embarrassment experienced by the peasants who came to attend the meetings of our parliamentary group. A ‘party of gentlemen’, that is what they said to each other when they ceased to attend our meetings.”[10]

At the local level, cooperation between the Union for the integrality of rights and the Cadet Party was manifested not only in the presence of “as many Jewish candidates as possible”, but also in the fact that “the local factions of the Union [for the integrality of rights] was instructed to support [non-Jews] who promised to contribute to the emancipation of the Jews.”[11] As explained in 1907 the cadet newspaper Retch, in reply to questions repeatedly asked by other newspapers: “*Retch* has, in its time, formulated very precisely the conditions of the agreement with the Jewish group… The latter has the right to challenge the electoral college and to oppose nominations to the Duma.”[12]

During the parliamentary debates, the Duma, following the logic of the Imperial Manifesto, raised the question of equal rights for Jews within the general framework of granting the same rights to all citizens. “The State Duma has promised to prepare a ‘law on the full equalisation of the rights of all citizens and the abrogation of any limitations or privileges associated with membership to a social class, nationality, religion or sex’.”[13] After adopting the main guidelines of this law, the Duma lost itself in debates for another month, multiplying “thunderous declarations followed by no effect”[14], to be ultimately dissolved. And the law on civil equality, especially for the Jews, remained pending.

Like most Cadets, the Jewish deputies of the First Duma signed Vyborg’s appeal, which meant that it was now impossible for them to stand for elections; Winaver’s career particularly suffered from it. (In the First Duma, he had made violent remarks, although he would later advise the Jews not to put themselves too much in the spotlight to prevent a recurrence of what had happened in the revolution of 1905.)

“The participation of the Jews in the elections of the second Duma was even more marked than during the first election campaign… The Jewish populations of the Pale of Settlement showed the strongest interest in this election. The political debate reached all levels of society.” Nevertheless, as the *Jewish Encyclopædia* published before the Revolution indicates, there was also an important anti-Jewish propaganda carried out by right-wing monarchist circles, particularly active in the western provinces; “the peasants were persuaded that all progressive parties were fighting for the equal rights of the Jews to the detriment of the interests of the ethnic population”[15]; that “behind the masquerade of the popular representation, the country was governed by a Judeo-Masonic union of spoliators of the people and traitors to the fatherland”; that the peasant should be alarmed at the “unprecedented number of new masters unknown to the elders of the village, and whom he henceforth had to nourish with his labour”; that the Constitution “promised to replace the Tatar yoke by that, injurious, of the international *Kahal*.” And a list of the existing rights to be abrogated was drawn up: not only were Jews not to be elected to the Duma, but they all had to be relegated to the Pale of Settlement; prohibiting them from selling wheat, grain and timber, working in banks or commercial establishments; confiscating their properties; prohibiting them from changing their names; to serve as publisher or editor of news organisation; to reduce the Pale of Settlement itself by excluding the fertile regions, to not grant land to the Jews within the province of Yakutsk; in general, to regard them as foreigners, to substitute for them military service by a tax, etc. “The result of this anti-Semitic propaganda, spread both orally and in writing, was the collapse of progressive candidates in the second Duma throughout the Pale of Settlement.”[16] There were only four Jewish deputies in the second Duma (including three Cadets).[17]

But even before these elections, the government addressed the issue of equal rights for Jews. Six months after taking office as Prime Minister in December 1906, Stolypin had the government adopt a resolution (the so-called “Journal of the Council of Ministers”) on the continuation of the lifting of restrictions imposed on Jews, and this in essential areas, thus orienting itself towards integral equality. “They considered to eliminate: the prohibition of Jews from residing in rural areas within the Pale of Settlement; the prohibition of residing in rural areas throughout the

Empire for persons enjoying the right of universal residence"; "the prohibition of including Jews in the directory of joint stock companies holding land."[18]

But the Emperor replied in a letter dated 10 December: "Despite the most convincing arguments in favour of adopting these measures… an inner voice dictates with increasing insistence not to take this decision upon myself."[19]

As if he did not understand—or rather forgot—that the resolution proposed in the *Journal* was the direct and inescapable consequence of the Manifesto he had signed himself a year earlier…

Even in the most closed bureaucratic world, there are always officials with eyes and hands. And if the rumour of a decision taken by the Council of Ministers had already spread to the public opinion? And here we are: we will know that the ministers want to emancipate the Jews while the sovereign, he, stood in its way…

On the same day, 10 December, Stolypin hastened to write to the Emperor a letter full of anxiety, repeating all his arguments one by one, and especially: "The dismissal of the *Journal* is for the moment not known by anyone," it is therefore still possible to conceal the equivocations of the monarch. "Your Majesty, we have no right to put you in this position and shelter ourselves behind you." Stolypin would have liked the advantages accorded to the Jews to appear as a favour granted by the tsar. But since this was not the case, he now proposed to adopt another resolution: the Emperor made no objections on the merits, but did not want the law to be promulgated over the head of the Duma; it must be done by the Duma.

Secretary of State S. E. Kryjanovski said that the emperor then adopted a resolution which went along in this direction: that the representatives of the people take responsibility both for raising this issue as well as resolving it. But, no one knows why, this resolution received little publicity, and "on the side of the Duma, absolutely nothing happened."[20]

Widely to the left, penetrated by progressive ideas and so vehement towards the government, the second Duma was free! Yet, in the second Duma, there was still less talk of the deprivation of rights suffered by the Jews than in the first."[21] The law on equal rights for Jews was not even discussed, so, what can be said about its adoption…

Why then did the second Duma not take advantage of the opportunities offered to it? Why did it not seize them? It had three entire months to do it. And why did the debates, the clashes, relate only to secondary, tangential issues? The equality of the Jews—still partial, but already well advanced—was abandoned. Why, indeed, why? As for the "Extra-Parliamentary Extraordinary Commission", it did not even discuss the plan to repeal the restrictions imposed on Jews, but circumvented the problem by focusing on *integral* equality "as quickly as possible."[22]

Difficult to explain this other than by a political calculation: the aim being to fight the Autocracy, the interest was to raise more and more the pressure on the Jewish question, and to certainly not resolve it: ammunition was thus kept in reserve. These brave knights of liberty reasoned in these terms: to avoid that the lifting of restrictions imposed on the Jews would diminish their ardour in battle. For these knights without fear and without reproach, the most important, was indeed the fight against the power.

All this was beginning to be seen and understood. Berdyaev, for example, addressed the whole spectrum of Russian radicalism with the following reproaches: "You are very sensitive to the Jewish question, you are fighting for their rights. But do you feel the 'Jew', do you feel the soul of the Jewish people?… No, your fight in favour for the Jews does not want to know the Jews."[23]

Then, in the third Duma, the Cadets no longer had the majority; they "did not take any more initiatives on the Jewish question, fearing that they would be defeated… This caused great discontent among the Jewish masses, and the Jewish press did not deprive itself of attacking the party of the People's Freedom."[24] Although "the Jews had participated in the electoral campaign with the greatest ardour and the number of Jewish voters exceeded that of the Christians in all the cities of the Pale of Settlement," they were beaten by the opposing party, and in the third Duma there were only two Jewish deputies: Nisselovitch and Friedman.[25] (The latter succeeded to remain up to the fourth

Duma.)—Beginning in 1915, the Council of State included among its members a Jew, G. E. Weinstein, of Odessa. (Just before the revolution, there was also Solomon Samoylovich Krym, a Karaim.[26])

As for the Octobrists[*] whose party had become a majority in the third Duma, on the one hand they ceded, not without hesitation, to the pressure of public opinion which demanded equal rights for the Jews, which led to the criticism of Russian nationalist deputies: "We thought that the Octobrists remained attached to the defence of national interests"—and now, without warning, they had relegated to the background both the question of "the granting of equal rights to the Russians of Finland" (which meant that this equality did not exist in this "Russian colony"…) and that of the annexation by Russia of the Kholm region in Poland, with all Russians that inhabit it—but "they have prepared a bill to abolish the Pale of Settlement."[27] On the other hand, they were attributed statements "of manifestly anti-Semitic character": thus the third Duma, on the initiative of Guchkov, issued in 1906 "the wish… that Jewish doctors not be admitted to work in the army health services"[28]; likewise, "it was proposed to replace the military service of the Jews by a tax."[29] (In the years preceding the war, the project of dispensing the Jews from military service was still largely and seriously debated; and I. V. Hessen published a book on this subject entitled *The War and the Jews*.)

In short, neither the second, third, nor fourth Dumas took it upon themselves to pass the law on the integral equality of rights for the Jews. And every time it was necessary to ratify the law on equality of rights for *peasants* (promulgated by Stolypin as of 5 October 1906), it was blocked by the same Dumas, under the pressure of the left, on the grounds that the peasants could not be granted equal rights before they were granted to the Jews (and the Poles)!

And thus the pressure exerted upon this execrated tsarist government was not relieved, but doubled, quintupled. And not only did this pressure exerted on the government not be relieved, not only were these laws not voted upon by the Duma, but it would last until the February Revolution.

While Stolypin, after his unfortunate attempt in December 1906, quietly took administrative measures to partially lift the restrictions imposed on the Jews.

An editorialist from *Novoie Vremia*, Menshikov, condemned this method: "Under Stolypin, the Pale of Settlement has become a fiction."[30] The Jews "are defeating the Russian power by gradually withdrawing all its capacity to intervene… The government behaves as if it were a Jew."[31]

Such is the fate of the middle way.

The general outcry of the parties of the left against a policy of progressive measures, this tactical refusal for a smooth evolution towards equal rights, was strongly supported by the Russian press. Since the end of 1905, it was no longer subject to prior censorship. But it was not only a press that had become free, it was a press that considered itself a full-fledged actor in the political arena, a press, as we have seen, that could formulate demands, such as that of *withdrawing the police from the streets of the city*! Witte said it had lost its reason.

In the case of the Duma, the way in which Russia, even in its most remote provinces, was informed of what was going on there and what was said there, depended entirely on journalists. The shorthand accounts of the debates appeared late and with very low circulation, so there was no other source of information than the daily press, and it was based on what they read that the people formed an opinion. However, the newspapers systematically distorted the debates in the Duma, largely opening their columns to the deputies of the left and showering them with praise, while to the deputies of the right they allowed only a bare minimum.

A. Tyrkova says that in the second Duma, "the accredited journalists formed their own press office," which "depended on the distribution of places" among the correspondents. The members of this office "refused to give his card of accreditation" to the correspondent of the Journal the *Kolokol* (favourite newspaper of the priests of the countryside). Tyrkova intervened, noting that "these readers should not be deprived of the possibility of being informed about the debates in the Duma by a newspaper in which they had more confidence than those of the opposition"; but "my colleagues, among whom the Jews were the most numerous…, got carried away, began shouting, explaining that no one was reading the *Kolokol*, that that newspaper was of no use."[32]

For the Russian nationalist circles, responsibility for this conduct of the press was simply and solely the responsibility of the Jews. They wanted to prove that almost all journalists accredited to the Duma were Jews. And they published "whistle-blowing" lists listing the names of these correspondents. More revealing is this comical episode of parliamentary life: one day, answering to the attacks of which he was the object, Purishkevich pointed, in the middle of his speech, the box of the press, located near the tribune and delimited by a circular barrier, and said: "But see this *Pale of Settlement of the Jews*!"—Everyone turned involuntarily to the representatives of the press, and it was a general burst of laughter that even the Left could not repress. This "Pale of Settlement of the Duma" became an adopted wording.

Among the prominent Jewish publishers, we have already spoken of S. M. Propper, owner of the *Stock Exchange News* and unfailing sympathiser of the "revolutionary democracy". Sliosberg evokes more warmly the one who founded and funded to a large extent the cadet newspaper *Retch*, I. B. Bak: "A very obliging man, very cultured, with a radically liberal orientation." It was his passionate intervention at the Congress of the Jewish mutual aid committees at the beginning of 1906 that prevented a conciliation with the tsar. "There was no Jewish organisation devoted to cultural action or beneficence, of which I. Bak was not a member"; he was particularly distinguished by his work in the Jewish Committee for Liberation.[33] As for the *Retch* newspaper and its editor-in-chief I. V. Hessen, they were far from limiting themselves to Jewish questions alone, and their orientation was more generally liberal (Hessen subsequently proved it in emigration with the *Roul* and the Archives of the Russian Revolution). The very serious *Russkie Vedomosti* published Jewish authors of various tendencies, both V. Jabotinsky and the future inventor of war communism, Lourie-Larine. S. Melgounov noted that the publication in this body of articles favorable to the Jews was explained "not only by the desire to defend the oppressed, but also by the composition of the newspaper's managing team."[34] "There were Jews even among the collaborators of the *Novoie Vremia* of Suvorin"; the *Jewish Encyclopædia* quotes the names of five of them.[35]

The newspaper *Russkie Vedomosti* was long dominated by the figure of G. B. Iollos, called there by Guerzenstein who had been working there since the 80s. Both were deputies to the First Duma. Their lives suffered cruelly from the atmosphere of violence engendered by political assassinations—these being the very essence of the revolution—a "rehearsal" of 1905-06. According to the Israeli *Jewish Encyclopædia*, the responsibility for their assassination would rest with the Union of the Russian People.[*] For the Russian *Jewish Encyclopædia*, if the latter bore responsibility for the assassination of Guerzenstein (1906), Iollos, him, was killed (1907) by "Black Hundreds Terrorists."[36]

Jewish publishers and journalists did not restrict their activities to the capital or to highly intellectual publications, but they also intervened in the popular press, such as the *Kopeika*, a favourite reading of the concierges—a quarter of a million copies in circulation, it "played a major role in the fight against anti-Semitic denigration campaigns." (It had been created and was led by M. B. Gorodetski.[37]) The very influential *Kievskaya Mysl* (to the left of the Cadets) had as editor-in-chief Iona Kugel (they were four brothers, all journalists), and D. Zaslavski, a wicked rascal, and, what seems to us very moving, Leo Trotsky! The biggest newspaper of Saratov was edited by Averbakh-senior (brother-in-law of Sverdlov). In Odessa appeared for some time the *Novorossiysky Telegraf*, with strong right-wing convictions, but measures of economic suffocation were taken against it—successfully.

The Russian press also had "migrant" stars. Thus L. I. Goldstein, an inspired journalist who wrote in the most diverse newspapers for thirty-five years, including the *Syn Otetchestva*, and it was also he who founded and directed the *Rossia*, a clearly patriotic newspaper. The latter was closed because of a particularly virulent chronicle directed against the Imperial family: "These Obmanovy gentlemen". The press was to celebrate Goldstein's jubilee in the spring of 1917.[38]—As well as the discreet Garvei-Altus, who had a moment of glory for his chronicle "The Leap of the Passionate Panther", in which he poured a torrent of calumnies on the Minister of the Interior, N. A. Maklakov. (But all this was nothing compared to the unheard-of insolence of the "humouristic leaflets" of the years 1905-1907 which covered in muck, in unimaginable terms, all the spheres of power and of the State. The chameleon Zinovi Grjebine: in 1905 he published a satirical leaflet, the *Joupel*; in 1914-1915 he directed the right-minded *Otetchestvo*, and in 1920 he set up a Russian publishing house in Berlin in collaboration with the editions of the Soviet State.[39])

But if the press reflected all sorts of currents of thought, from liberalism to socialism, and, as far as the Jewish thematic was concerned, from Zionism to Autonomism, it was a position deemed incompatible with journalistic

respectability: which consisted in adopting a comprehensive attitude towards power. In the 70s, Dostoyevsky had already noted on several occasions that “the Russian press is out of control.” This was even to be seen on the occasion of the meeting of 8 March 1881, with Alexander III, newly enthroned emperor, and often afterwards: the journalists acted as self-proclaimed representatives of society.

The following statement was attributed to Napoleon: “Three opposition papers are more dangerous than one hundred thousand enemy soldiers.” This sentence applies largely to the Russo-Japanese war. The Russian press was openly defeatist throughout the conflict and in each of its battles. Even worse, it did not conceal its sympathies for terrorism and revolution.

This press, totally out of control in 1905, was considered during the period of the Duma, if we are to believe Witte, as essentially “Jewish” or “semi-Jewish”[40]; or, to be more precise, as a press dominated by left-wing or radical Jews who occupied key positions. In November 1905, D. I. Pikhno, editor-in-chief for twenty-five years of the Russian newspaper *The Kievian* and a connoisseur of the press of his time, wrote: “The Jews… have bet heavily on the card of the revolution… Those, among the Russians, who think seriously, have understood that in such moments, the press represents a force and that this force is not in their hands, but in that of their adversaries; that they speak on their behalf throughout Russia and have forced people to read them because there is nothing else to read; and as one cannot launch a publication in one day, [the opinion] has been drowned beneath this mass of lies, incapable of finding itself there.”[41]

L. Tikhomirov did not see the national dimension of this phenomenon, but he made in 1910 the following remarks about the Russian press: “They play on the nerves… They cannot stand contradiction… They do not want courtesy, fair play… They have no ideal, they do not know what that is.” As for the public formed by this press, it “wants aggressiveness, brutality, it does not respect knowledge and lets itself be deceived by ignorance.”[42]

At the other end of the political spectrum, here is the judgement that the Bolshevik M. Lemke passed on the Russian press: “In our day, ideas are not cheap and information is sensational, self-assured and authoritative ignorance fills the columns of the newspapers.”

More specifically, in the cultural sphere, Andrei Bely—who was anything but a right-wing man or “chauvinist”—wrote these bitter lines in 1909: “Our national culture is dominated by people who are foreign to it… See the names of those who write in Russian newspapers and magazines, literary critics, musical critics: they are practically nothing but Jews; there are among them people who have talent and sensibility, and some, few in number, understand our national culture perhaps better than the Russians themselves; but they are the exception. The mass of Jewish critics is totally foreign to Russian art, it expresses itself in a jargon resembling Esperanto, and carries on a reign of terror among those who try to deepen and enrich the Russian language.”[43]

At the same time, V. Jabotinsky, a perspicacious Zionist, complained of “progressive newspapers financed by Jewish funds and stuffed with Jewish collaborators,” and warned: “When the Jews rushed en masse into Russian politics, we predicted that nothing good would come of it, neither for Russian policy nor for the Jews.”[44]

The Russian press played a decisive role in the assault of the Cadets and the intelligentsia against the government before the revolution; the deputy in the Duma A. I. Chingariov expresses well the state of mind that reigned there: “This government only has to sink! To a power *like this* we cannot even throw the smallest bit of rope!” In this regard, it may be recalled that the First Duma observed a minute of silence in memory of the victims of the Bialystok pogrom (refusing to admit, as we have seen, that it was an armed confrontation between anarchists and the army); the second Duma also paid tribute to Iollos, murdered by a terrorist; but when Purishkevich offered to observe a minute of silence in memory of the officers and soldiers who had died in the course of their duty, he was removed from the sitting and the parliamentarians were so manic that they thought it unthinkable to pity those who ensured security in the country, that elementary security which they all needed.

A. Koulicher drew up a fair assessment of this period, but too late, in 1923, in emigration: “Before the revolution there were, among the Jews of Russia, individuals and groups of individuals, the activity could be characterised… precisely by the lack of sense of responsibility in the face of the confusion that reigned in the minds of the Jews…

[through] the propagation of a 'revolutionary spirit' as vague as it was superficial… All their political action consisted in being more to the left than the others. Confined to the role of irresponsible critics, never going to the end of things, they considered that their mission consisted of always saying: 'It is not enough!'… These people were 'democrats'… But there was also a particular category of democrats—moreover, they referred to themselves as the 'Jewish Democratic Group'—who attached this adjective to any substantive, inventing an unsustainable talmud of democracy… With the only end to demonstrate that the others were not yet sufficiently democrats… They maintained an atmosphere of irresponsibility around them, of contentless maximalism, of insatiable demand. All of which had fatal consequences when the revolution came."[45] The destructive influence of this press is undoubtedly one of the weaknesses, of great vulnerability, of Russian public life in the years 1914-1917.

But what became of the "reptilian press", the one that laid down in front of the authorities, the press of the Russian nationalists? The *Russkoye Znamya* of Dubrovin—it was said that things fell from your hands so much he was rude and bad. (Let us note, in passing, that it was forbidden to circulate it in the army at the request of certain generals.) The *Zemshchina* was hardly better—I do not know, I have not read any of these papers. As for the *Moskovskiye Vedomosti*, out of breath, they no longer had readers after 1905.

But where were the strong minds and sharp pens of the conservatives, those who were concerned about the fate of the Russians? Why were there no good newspapers to counterbalance the devastating whirlwind?

It must be said that, in view of the agile thought and writing of the liberal and radical press, so accountable for its dynamism to its Jewish collaborators, the Russian nationalists could only align slow, rather soft, spirits who were not at all prepared to fight this kind of battle (but what is there to say about this state of affairs today!). There were only a few literary types exasperated by the left press, but totally devoid of talent. Moreover, right-wing publications were facing serious financial difficulties. While the newspapers financed by "Jewish money"—as Jabotinsky used to say—offered very good wages, hence the profusion of wordsmiths; and, above all, all these journals without exception were interesting. Finally, the left-wing press and the Duma demanded the closure of the "subsidised newspapers", that is to say, supported in secret and rather weakly by the government.

State Secretary S. E. Kryjanovski acknowledged that the government was providing financial support to more than 30 newspapers in various parts of Russia, but without success, both because the right lacked educated people, prepared for journalistic activity, and because the power itself did not know how to do it either. More gifted than others was I. I. Gourland, a Jew of the Ministry of the Interior, a unique case—who, under the pseudonym of "Vassiliev", wrote pamphlets sent in sealed envelopes to prominent public figures.

Thus the government had only one organ which merely enumerated the news in a dry and bureaucratic tone, the *Pravitelstvenny Vestnik*. But to create something strong, brilliant, convincing, to openly go to the conquest of public opinion even in Russia—let us not even talk about Europe!—that, the imperial government either did not understand the necessity of it, or was incapable of doing so, the enterprise being beyond its means or intelligence.

The *Novoie Vremia* of Suvorin long maintained a pro-governmental orientation; it was a very lively, brilliant and energetic newspaper (but, it must be said, equally changing—sometimes favourable to the alliance with Germany, sometimes violently hostile to it), and, alas, not always knowing how to make the difference between national revival and attacks on the Jews. (Its founder, old Suvorin, sharing his property among his three sons before dying, gave them as a condition to never yielding any of their shares to Jews.) Witte ranked *Novoie Vremia* among the newspapers which, in 1905, "had an interest to be of the left…, then turned right to become now ultra-reactionaries. This very interesting and influential journal offers a striking example of this orientation." Although very commercial, "it still counts among the best."[46] It provided a great deal of information and was widely disseminated—perhaps the most dynamic of the Russian newspapers and, certainly, the most intelligent of the organs of the right.

And the leaders of the right? And the deputies of the right in the Duma?

Most often they acted without taking into account the real relationship between their strengths and their weaknesses, showing themselves both brutal and ineffective, seeing no other means of "defending the integrity of the Russian State" than calling for more bans on Jews. In 1911, the deputy Balachov developed a programme that went

against the current and the times: *reinforcing* the Pale of Settlement, removing Jews from publishing, justice, and the Russian school. Deputy Zamyslovski protested that within the universities, the Jews, the S.-R.s, the Social Democrats enjoyed a "secret sympathy"—as if one could overcome by decree a "secret sympathy"—In 1913 the Congress of the Union of the nobility demanded (as had already been done in 1908 under the third Duma) that more Jews be taken into the army, but that they be symmetrically excluded from public functions, the territorial and municipal administration, and justice.

In the spring of 1911, Purishkevich, striving with others against an already weakened Stolypin, proposed to the Duma these extreme measures: "Formally forbid the Jews to take any official duty in any administration… especially in the periphery of the Empire… The Jews convicted of having tried to occupy these functions will have to answer before justice."[47]

Thus the right reproached Stolypin for making concessions to the Jews.

When he had taken office in the spring of 1906, Stolypin had had to consider the Manifesto of 17 October as a *fait accompli*, even if it had to be slightly amended. That the Emperor had hastily signed it without sufficient reflection—it no longer mattered, it had to be applied, the State had to be rebuilt in the midst of difficulties, in accordance with the Manifesto and in spite of the hesitations of the tsar himself. And this implied equal rights for the Jews.

Of course, the restrictions imposed on the Jews continued, not only in Russia. In Poland, which was considered—as well as Finland—to be oppressed, these limitations were even more brutal. Jabotinsky writes: "The yoke that weighs heavily on Jews in Finland is beyond measure even with what is known of Russia or Romania… The first Finnish man, if he surprises a Jew out of a city, has the right to arrest the criminal and take him to the police station. Most trades are forbidden to Jews. Jewish marriages are subject to compulsory and humiliating formalities… It is very difficult to obtain permission to build a synagogue… The Jews are deprived of all political rights." Elsewhere in Austrian Galicia, "the Poles do not hide that they see in the Jews only a material used to strengthen their political power in this region… There have been cases where high school students were excluded from their establishment 'for cause of Zionism', one hinders in a thousand and one ways the functioning of Jewish schools, manifests hatred towards their jargon (Yiddish), and the Jewish Socialist Party itself is boycotted by the Polish Social-Democrats."[48] Even in Austria, although a country of Central Europe, hatred towards the Jews was still alive, and many restrictions remained in force, such as the Karlsbad baths: sometimes they were simply closed to the Jews, sometimes they could only go there in the summer, and the "winter Jews" could only access it under strict control.[49]

But the system of limitations in Russia itself fully justified the grievances expressed in the *Jewish Encyclopædia* as a whole: "The position of the Jews is highly uncertain, inasmuch as it depends on how the law is interpreted by those responsible for applying it, even at the lowest level of the hierarchy, or even simply their goodwill… This blur… is due to… the extreme difficulty of achieving uniform interpretation and application of the laws limiting the rights of the Jews… Their many provisions have been supplemented and modified by numerous decrees signed by the emperor on the proposal of various ministries… and which, moreover, were not always reported in the General Code of Laws"; "Even if he has an express authorisation issued by the competent authority, the Jew is not certain that his rights are intangible"; "A refusal emanating from a junior official, an anonymous letter sent by a competitor, or an approach made in the open by a more powerful rival seeking the expropriation of a Jew, suffice to condemn him to vagrancy."[50]

Stolypin understood very well the absurdity of such a state of affairs, and the irresistible movement that then pushed for a status of equality for the Jews, a status that already existed to a large extent in Russia.

The number of Jews established outside the Pale of Settlement increased steadily from year to year. After 1903, the Jews had access to an additional 101 places of residence, and the number of these was still significantly increased under Stolypin, which implemented a measure which the tsar had not taken in 1906 and which the Duma had rejected in 1907. The former *Jewish Encyclopædia* indicates that the number of these additional places of residence amounted to 291 in 1910-1912[51]; As for the new *Encyclopædia*, it puts the number to 299 for the year 1911.[52]

The old *Encyclopædia* reminds us that from the summer of 1905 onwards, in the wake of revolutionary events, "the

governing bodies [of educational establishments] did not take into account the *numerus clausus* for three years." From August 1909 onwards, the latter was reduced from what it was before in the higher and secondary schools (now 5% in the capitals, 10% outside the Pale of Settlement, 15% within it[54]), but subject to compliance. However, since the proportion of Jewish students was 11% at the University of Saint Petersburg and 24% at that of Odessa[55], this measure was felt to be a new restriction. A restrictive measure was adopted in 1911: the *numerus clausus* was extended to the outside world[56] (for boys only, and in girls' institutions the real percentage was 13.5% in 1911). At the same time, artistic, commercial, technical and vocational schools accepted Jews without restrictions. "After secondary and higher education, the Jews rushed into vocational education" which they had neglected until then. Although in 1883 "Jews in all municipal and regional vocational schools" accounted for only 2% of the workforce, 12% of boys and 17% of girls in 1898.[57] In addition, "Jewish youth filled private higher education institutions"; thus, in 1912, the Kiev Institute of Commerce had 1,875 Jewish students, and the Psycho-Neurological Institute, "thousands". Beginning in 1914, any private educational institution could provide courses in the language of its choice.[58]

It is true that compulsory education for all was part of the logic of the time.

Stolypin's main task was to carry out the agrarian reform, thus creating a solid class of peasant-owners. His companion in arms, Minister of Agriculture A. V. Krivoshein, who was also in favour of abolishing the Pale of Settlement, insisted at the same time that be limited "the right of anonymous companies with shares" to proceed with the purchase of land, to the extent that it was likely to result in the formation of a "significant Jewish land capital"; indeed, "the penetration into the rural world of Jewish speculative capital risked jeopardising the success of the agrarian reform" (at the same time he expressed the fear that this would lead to the emergence of anti-Semitism unknown until then in the countryside of Greater Russia[59]). Neither Stolypin nor Krivoshein could allow that the peasants remain in misery due to the fact of not owning land. In 1906, Jewish agricultural settlements were also deprived of the right to acquire land belonging to the State, which was now reserved for peasants.[60]

The economist M. Bernadski cited the following figures for the pre-war period: 2.4% of Jews worked in agriculture, 4.7% were liberal professionals, 11.5% were domestic servants, 31% worked in commerce (Jews accounted for 35% of merchants in Russia), 36% in industry; 18% of the Jews were settled in the Pale of Settlement.[61] In comparing the latter figure to the 2.4% mentioned above, the number of Jews residing in rural areas and occupied in agriculture had not increased significantly, while according to Bernadski, "it was in the interest of the *Russians* that Jewish forces and resources were investing themselves in all areas of production", any limitation imposed on them "represented a colossal waste of the productive forces of the country." He pointed out that in 1912, for example, the Society of producers and manufacturers of an industrial district in Moscow had approached the President of the Council of Ministers so that the Jews would not be prevented from playing their role of intermediary link with Russian industrial production centres.[62]

B. A. Kamenka, chairman of the Board of Directors of Azov Bank and the Don, turned to the financing of the mining and metallurgical industry and sponsored eleven important enterprises in the Donets and Urals region.[63]—There was no restriction on the participation of Jews in joint-stock companies in the industry, but "the limitations imposed on joint-stock companies wishing to acquire property triggered an outcry in all financial and industrial circles." And the measures taken by Krivoshein were to be abrogated.[64]

V. Choulguine made the following comparison: "The 'Russian power' seemed very ingenuous in the face of the perfectly targeted offensive of the Jews. The Russian power reminded one of the flood of a long and peaceful river: an endless expanse plunged into a soft sleepiness; there is water, oh my God there is, but it is only sleeping water. Now this same river, a few versts farther away, enclosed by strong dikes, is transformed into an impetuous torrent, whose bubbling waters precipitate itself madly into turbines."[65]

It is the same rhetoric that is heard on the side of liberal economic thought: "Russia, so poor… in highly skilled workforce…, seems to want to further increase its ignorance and its intellectual lagging in relation to the West." Denying the Jews access to the levers of production "amounts to a deliberate refusal to use… their productive forces."[66]

Stolypin saw very well that this was wasteful. But the different sectors of the Russian economy were developing too unevenly. And he regarded the restrictions imposed on Jews as a kind of customs tax that could only be temporary, until the Russians consolidated their forces in public life as well as in the sphere of the economy, these protective measures secreted an unhealthy greenhouse climate for them. Finally (but after how many years?), the government began to implement the measures for the development of the peasant world, from which were to result a true and genuine *equality of rights* between social classes and nationalities; a development which would have made the Russians' fear of the Jews disappear and which would have put a definitive end to all the restrictions of which the latter were still victims.

Stolypin was considering using Jewish capital to stimulate Russia's economy by welcoming their many joint-stock companies, enterprises, concessions and natural resource businesses. At the same time, he understood that private banks, dynamic and powerful, often preferred to agree among themselves rather than compete, but he intended to counterbalance this phenomenon by "nationalising credit", that is, the strengthening of the role of the State Bank and the creation of a fund to help entrepreneurial peasants who could not obtain credit elsewhere.

But Stolypin was making another political calculation: he thought that obtaining equal rights would take some of the Jews away from the revolutionary movement. (Among other arguments, he also put forward: at the local level, bribery was widely used to circumvent the law, which had the effect of spreading corruption within the State apparatus.)

Among the Jews, those who did not give in to fanaticism realised that, despite the continued restrictions, in spite of the increasingly virulent (but impotent) attacks on right-wing circles, those years offered more and more favourable conditions to the Jews and were necessarily leading to equal rights.

Just a few years later, thrown into emigration by the "great revolution", two renowned Jewish figures meditated on pre-revolutionary Russia:

Self-taught out of poverty at the cost of the greatest efforts, he had passed his bachelor's degree as an external candidate at the age of thirty and obtained his university degree at thirty-five; he had actively participated in the Liberation Movement and had always regarded Zionism as an illusory dream—his name was Iosif Menassievich Bikerman. From the height of his fifty-five years of age he wrote: "Despite the regulations of May [1882] and other provisions of the same type, despite the Pale of Settlement and *numerus clausus*, despite Kishinev and Bialystok, I was a free man and I felt as such, a man who had before him a wide range of possibilities to work in all kinds of fields, who could enrich himself both materially and spiritually, who could fight to improve his situation and conserve his strength to continue the fight. The restrictions… were always diminishing under the pressure of the times and under ours, and during the war a wide breach was opened in the last bastion of our inequality. It was necessary to wait another five or fifteen years before obtaining complete equality before the law; we could wait."[67]

Belonging to the same generation as Bikerman, he shared very different convictions and his life was also very different: a convinced Zionist, a doctor (he taught for a time at the Faculty of Medicine in Geneva), an essayist and a politician, Daniil Samoylovich Pasmanik, an immigrant as well, wrote at the same time as Bikerman the following lines: "Under the tsarist regime, the Jews lived infinitely better and, whatever may be said of them, their conditions of life before the war—both materially as well as others—were excellent. We were then deprived of political rights, but we could develop intense activity in the sphere of our national and cultural values, while the chronic misery that had been our lot disappeared progressively."[68]—"The chronic economic slump of the Jewish masses diminished day by day, leaving room for material ease, despite the senseless deportations of several tens of thousands of Jews out of the Front areas. The statistics of the mutual credit societies… are the best proof of the economic progress enjoyed by the Jews of Russia during the decade preceding the coup. And so it was in the field of culture. Despite the police regime—it was absolute freedom in comparison with the present Bolshevik regime—Jewish cultural institutions of all kinds prospered. Everything was bursting with activity: organisations were booming, creation was also very alive and vast prospects were now open."[69]

In a little more than a century, under the Russian crown, the Jewish community had grown from 820,000 (including the Kingdom of Poland) to more than five million representatives, even though more than one and a half million chose

to emigrate, —an increase of a factor of eight between 1800 and 1914. Over the last 90 years, the number of Jews had multiplied by 3.5 (going from 1.5 million to 5,250,000), whereas during the same period the total population of the Empire (including the new territories) had multiplied by only 2.5.

However, the Jews were still subject to restrictions, which fuelled anti-Russian propaganda in the United States. Stolypin thought he could overcome it by *explaining* it, inviting members of Congress and American journalists to come and see, in Russia itself. But in the autumn of 1911, the situation became so severe that it led to the denunciation of a trade agreement with the United States dating back eighty years. Stolypin did not yet know what the effect of a passionate speech of the future peacemaker, Wilson, might be, nor what the unanimity of the American Congress could mean. He did not live enough to know.

Stolypin, who imprinted its direction, gave its light and name to the decade before the First World War,—all the while he was the object of furious attacks on the part of both the Cadets and the extreme right, when deputies of all ranks dragged him in the mud because of the law on the Zemstvo reform in the western provinces—was assassinated in September 1911.

The first head of the Russian government to have honestly raised and attempted to resolve, in spite of the Emperor's resistance, the question of equality for the Jews, fell—irony of History!—under the blows of a Jew.

Such is the fate of the middle way…

Seven times attempts had been made to kill Stolypin, and it was revolutionary groups more or less numerous that had fermented the attacks—in vain. Here, it was an isolated individual who pulled it off.

At a very young age, Bogrov did not have sufficient intellectual maturity to understand the political importance of Stolypin's role. But from his childhood he had witnessed the daily and humiliating consequences of the inequality of the Jews, and his family, his milieu, his own experience cultivated his hatred for imperial power. In the Jewish circles of Kiev, which seemed ideologically mobile, no one was grateful to Stolypin for his attempts to lift the restrictions imposed on the Jews, and even if this feeling had touched some of the better off, it was counterbalanced by the memory of the energetic way in which he had repressed the revolution of 1905-1906, as well as by the discontent with his efforts to "nationalise credit" in order to openly compete with private capital. The Jewish circles in Kiev (but also in Petersburg where the future murderer had also stayed) were under the magnetic influence of a *field* of absolute radicalism, which led young Bogrov not only to feel entitled, but to consider it his duty to kill Stolypin.

This *field* was so powerful that it allowed the following combination: Bogrov-senior rose in society, he is a capitalist who prospers in the existing system; Bogrov-junior works at destroying this system and his father, after the attack, publicly declares that he is proud of him.

In fact, Bogrov was not so isolated: he was discreetly applauded in the circles which once manifested their unwavering fidelity to the regime.

This gunshot that put an end to the hope that Russia ever recovered its health could have been equally fired at the tsar himself. But Bogrov had decided that it was impossible, for (as he declared himself) "it might have led to persecution against the Jews," to have "damaging consequences on their legal position." While the Prime Minister would simply not have such effects, he thought. But he was deceived heavily when he imagined that his act would serve to improve the lot of the Jews of Russia.

And Menshikov himself, who had first reproached Stolypin with the concessions he had made to the Jews, now lamented his disappearance: our great man, our best political leader for a century and a half—assassinated! And the assassin is a Jew! A Jew who did not hesitate to shoot the Prime Minister of Russia!? "The gunshot of Kiev… must be considered as a warning signal… the situation is very serious… we must not cry revenge, but finally decide to resist!"[71]

And what happened then in "Kiev the reactionary" where the Jews were so numerous? In the first hours after the attack, they were massively seized with panic and began to leave the city. Moreover, "the Jews were struck with terror

not only in Kiev, but in the most remote corners of the Pale of Settlement and of the rest of Russia." The Club of Russian Nationalists expressed its intention to circulate a petition to drive out all the Jews of Kiev (which remained at the stage of intentions). There was not the start of a beginning of pogrom. The President of the youth organisation "The Two-Headed Eagle", Galkin, called for destroying the offices of the local security and for busting some Jew: he was immediately neutralised. The new Prime Minister, Kokovtsov, urgently recalled all Cossack regiments (they were manœuvring away from the city) and sent a very firm telegram to all the governors: to prevent pogroms by any means, including force. The troops were concentrated in greater numbers than during the revolution. (Sliosberg: if pogroms had broken out in 1911, "Kiev would have been the scene of a carnage comparable to the horrors of the time of Bogdan Khmelnitsky."[73])

No, nowhere in Russia there was the slightest pogrom. (Despite this, there has been much written, and insistently, that the tsarist power had never dreamed of anything but one thing: to organise an anti-Jewish pogrom.)

Of course, the prevention of public disorder is one of the primary duties of the State, and when this mission is fulfilled, it does not have to expect recognition. But that under such extreme circumstances—the assassination of the head of government—, that it was possible to avoid pogroms, the threat of which caused panic among the Jews, it nevertheless merited a small mention, if only in passing. Well, no, we did not hear anything like *that* and no one spoke about *it*.

Difficult to believe, but the Kiev Jewish community did not publicly express condemnation nor regret regarding this assassination. On the contrary. After the execution of Bogrov, many Jewish students were ostensibly in mourning.

However, all this, the Russians noted it. Thus, in December 1912, Rozanov wrote: "After [Stolypin's assassination] something broke in my relationship [to the Jews]: would a Russian ever have dared to kill Rothschild or any other of '*their* great men'?"[74]

If we look at it from a historical point of view, two important arguments prevent the act committed by Bogrov from being considered on behalf of the "powers of internationalism". The first and most important: it was not the case. Not only the book written by his brother[75], but different neutral sources suggest that Bogrov really believed that he could work this way to improve the lot of the Jews. And the second: to return to certain uncomfortable episodes in history, to examine them attentively to deplore them, is to assume one's responsibilities; but to deny them and wash one's hands, that's just low.

Yet this is what happened almost immediately. In October 1911, the Duma was arrested by the Octobrists on the murky circumstances of the assassination of Stolypin. This provoked an immediate protest from the deputy Nisselovitch: why, when formulating their interpellation, did the Octobrists *not conceal* the fact that the murderer of Stolypin was Jewish? It was there, he declared, anti-Semitism!

I shall have to endure this incomparable argument myself. Seventy years later, I was the object of a heavy accusation on the part of the Jewish community in the United States: why, in my turn, *did I not conceal*, why did I say that the assassin of Stolypin was a Jew[*]? It does not matter if I have endeavoured to make a description as complete as possible. It does not matter what the fact of being Jew represented in the motivations of his act. No, *non-dissimulation* betrayed my anti-Semitism!!

At the time, Guchkov replied with dignity: "I think that there is much more anti-Semitism in Bogrov's very act. I would suggest to the Deputy Nisselovitch that he should address his passionate words not to us but to his fellow co-religionists. Let him use all the force of his eloquence to convince them to keep away from two profane professions: that of spy in the service of the secret police and that of terrorist. He would thus render a much greater service to the members of his community!"[76]

But what can one ask of the Jewish memory when Russian history itself has allowed this murder to be effaced from its memory as an event without great significance, as a smear as marginal as it is negligible. It was only in the 80s that I started to pull it out of oblivion—for seventy years, to mention it was considered inappropriate.

As the years go by, more events and meanings come to our eyes.

More than once I have meditated on the whims of History: on *the unpredictability of the consequences* it raises on our path—I speak of the consequences of our actions. The Germany of William II opened the way for Lenin to destroy Russia, and twenty-eight years later it found itself divided for half a century.—Poland contributed to the strengthening of the Bolsheviks in the year 1919, which was so difficult for them, and it harvested 1939, 1944, 1956, 1980.—With what eagerness Finland helped Russian revolutionaries, she who could not bear, who did not suffer from the particular freedoms at her disposal—but within Russia—and, in return, she suffered forty years of political humiliation ("Finlandisation").—In 1914, England wanted to put down the power of Germany, its competitor on the world stage, and it lost its position of great power, and it was the whole of Europe that had been destroyed. In Petrograd, the Cossacks remained neutral both in February and in October; a year later, they underwent their genocide (and many of the victims were these *same* Cossacks).—In the first days of July 1917, the S.-R. of the left approached the Bolsheviks, then formed a semblance of a "coalition", a broad platform; a year later they were crushed as no autocracy could have had the means to do so.

These distant consequences, none of us are capable of foreseeing them, ever. The only way to guard against such errors is to always be guided by the compass of divine morality. Or, as the people say: "Do not dig a pit for others, you will fall into it yourself."

Similarly, if the assassination of Stolypin had cruel consequences for Russia, the Jews neither derived any benefit from it.

Everyone can see things in his own way, but I see here the giant footsteps of History, and I am struck by the unpredictable character of its results.

Bogrov killed Stolypin, thus thinking of protecting the Jews from oppression. Stolypin would in any case have been removed from office by the Emperor, but he would surely have been recalled again in 1914-16 because of the dizzying deficiency in men able to govern; and under his government we would not have had such a lamentable end neither in the war nor in the revolution. (Assuming that with him in power we would have engaged in this war.)

First footstep of History: Stolypin is killed, Russia works its last nerves in war and lies under the heel of the Bolsheviks.

Second footstep: however fierce they are, the Bolsheviks reveal themselves as being more lame than the imperial government, abandoning half of Russia to the Germans a quarter of a century later, including Kiev.

Third footstep: the Nazis invest in Kiev without any difficulty and annihilate its Jewish community.

Again the city of Kiev, once again a month of September, but thirty years after Bogrov's revolver shot.

And still in Kiev, still in 1911, six months before the assassination of Stolypin, had started what would become the Beilis affair[*]. There is good reason to believe that under Stolypin, justice would not have been degraded as such. One clue: one knows that once, examining the archives of the Department of Security, Stolypin came across a note entitled "The Secret of the Jews" (which anticipated the "Protocols"[**]), in which was discussed the "International Jewish plot". Here is the judgement he made: "There may be logic, but also bias… The government cannot use under any circumstance this kind of method."[77] As a result, "the official ideology of the tsarist government never relied on the 'Protocols'."[78]

Thousands and thousands of pages have been written about the Beilis trial. Anyone who would like to study closely all the meanders of the investigation, of the public opinion, of the trial itself, would have to devote at least several years to it. This would go beyond the limits of this work. Twenty years after the event, under the Soviet regime, the daily reports of the police on the progress of the trial were published[79]; they can be commended to the attention of amateurs. It goes without saying that the *verbatim* record of the entire proceedings was also published. Not to mention the articles published in the press.

Andrei Yushchinsky, a 12-year-old boy, pupil of a religious institution in Kiev, is the victim of a savage and unusual murder: there are forty-seven punctures on his body, which indicate a certain knowledge of anatomy—they were made to the temple, to the veins and arteries of the neck, to the liver, to the kidneys, to the lungs, to the heart, with the clear intention of emptying him of his blood as long as he was still alive, and in addition—according to the traces left by the blood flow—in a standing position (tied and gagged, of course). It can only be the work of a very clever criminal who certainly did not act alone. The body was discovered only a week later in a cave on the territory of the factory of Zaitsev. But the murder was not committed there.

The first accusations do not refer to ritual motives, but the latter soon appears: the connection is made with the beginning of Jewish Passover and the construction of a new synagogue on the grounds of Zaitsev (a Jew). Four months after the murder, this version of the accusation leads to the arrest of Menahem Mendel Beilis, 37, employed at the Zaitsev factory. He is arrested without any real charges against him. How did all this happen?

The investigation into the murder was carried out by the criminal police of Kiev, a worthy colleague, obviously, of the Security section of Kiev, which had gotten tangled up in the Bogrov affair[*] and thus caused the loss of Stolypin. The work was entrusted to two nobodies in all respects similar to Kouliabko, Bogrov's "curator", Michtchouk, and Krassovsky, assisted by dangerous incompetents (they cleaned the snow in front of the cave to facilitate the passage of the corpulent commissioner of police, thus destroying any potential indications of the presence of the murderers). But worse still, rivalry settled between the investigators—it was to whom the merit of the discovery of the guilty person would be attributed, by whom the best version would be proposed—and they did not hesitate to get in each other's way, to sow confusion in the investigation, to put pressure on the witnesses, to stop the competitor's indicators; Krassovksy went so far as to put makeup on the suspect before introducing him to a witness! This parody of inquiry was conducted as if it were a trivial story, without the importance of the event even crossing their minds. When the trial finally opened, two and a half years later, Michtchouk had run off to Finland to escape the charge of falsification of material evidence, a significant collaborator of Krassovsky had also disappeared, and as for the latter, dismissed of his duties, he had switched sides and was now working for Beilis's lawyers.

For nearly two years, we went from one false version to another; for a long time the accusation was directed to the family of the victim, until the latter was completely put out of the question. It became clearer and clearer that the prosecution was moving towards a formal accusation against Beilis and towards his trial.

He was therefore accused of murder—even though the charges against him were doubtful—because he was a Jew. But how was it possible in the twentieth century to inflate a trial to the point of making it a threat to an entire people? Beyond the person of Beilis, the trial turned in fact into an accusation against the Jewish people as a whole—and, since then, the atmosphere around the investigation and then the trial became superheated, the affair took on an international dimension, gained the whole of Europe, and then America. (Until then, trials for ritual murders had taken place rather in the Catholic milieu: Grodno (1816), Velij (1825), Vilnius, the Blondes case (1900), the Koutais affair (1878) took place in Georgia, Doubossar (1903) in Moldavia, while in Russia strictly speaking, there was only the Saratov affair in 1856. Sliosberg, however, does not fail to point out that the Saratov affair also had also a Catholic origin, while in Beilis's case it was observed that the band of thieves who had been suspected at one time was composed of Poles, that the ritual crime expert appointed at the trial was a Catholic, and that the attorney Tchaplinski was also Polish.[80])

The findings of the investigation were so questionable that they were only retained by the Kiev indictment chambre by three votes to two. While the monarchist right had sparked an extensive press campaign, Purishkevich expressed himself in the Duma in April 1911: "We do not accuse the Jews as a whole, we cry for the truth" about this strange and mysterious crime. "Is there a Jewish sect that advocates ritual murders…? If there are such fanatics, let them be stigmatised"; as for us, "we are fighting against many sects in Russia," our own[81], but at the same time he declared that, according to him, the affair would be stifled in the Duma by fear of the press. Indeed, at the opening of the trial, the right-wing nationalist Chulguine declared himself opposed to it being held and to the "miserable baggage" of the judicial authorities in the columns of the patriotic *Kievian* (for which he was accused by the extreme Right to be sold to the Jews). But, in view of the exceptionally monstrous character of the crime, no one dared to go back to the accusation in order to resume the investigation from scratch.

On the other side, the liberal-radicals also launched a public campaign relayed by the press, and not only the Russian press, but that of the whole world. The tension had reached a point of no return. Sustained by the partiality of the accusation, it only escalated, and the witnesses themselves were soon attacked. According to V. Rozanov, every sense of measure had been lost, especially in the Jewish press: “The iron fist of the Jew… falls on venerable professors, on members of the Duma, on writers…”[82]

However, the ultimate attempts to get the investigation back on track had failed. The stable near the Zaitsev factory, which was initially neglected by Krassovsky and then assumed to have been the scene of the crime, burned down two days before the date fixed for its examination by hasty investigators. A brazen journalist, Brazul-Brouchkovsky, conducted his own investigation assisted by the same Krassovsky, now released from his official duties. (It must be remembered that Bonch-Bruevich[*] published a pamphlet accusing Brazoul of venality.[83]) They put forward a version of the facts according to which the murder was allegedly committed by Vera Cheberyak, whose children frequented Andrei Yushchinsky, herself flirting with the criminal underworld. During their long months of inquiry, the two Cheberyak sons died under obscure circumstances; Vera accused Krassovsky of poisoning them, who in turn accused her of killing her own children. Ultimately, their version was that Yushchinsky had been killed by Cheberyak in person with the intention of simulating a ritual murder. She said that the lawyer Margoline had offered her 40,000 rubles to endorse the crime, which he denied at the trial even though he was subject at the same moment to administrative penalties for indelicacy.

Trying to disentangle the innumerable details of this judicial imbroglio would only make the understanding even more difficult. (It should also be mentioned that the “metis” of the revolution and the secret police were also involved. In this connection, mention should be made of the equivocal role and strange behaviour during the trial of Lieutenant-Colonel Gendarmerie Pavel Ivanov—the very one who, in defiance of all laws, helped Bogrov, already condemned to death, to write a new version of the reasons which would have prompted him to kill Stolypin, a version in which the full weight of responsibility fell on the organs of Security to which Ivanov did not belong.) The trial was about to open in a stormy atmosphere. It lasted a month: September-October 1913. It was incredibly heavy: 213 witnesses summoned to the bar (185) presented themselves, still slowed down by the procedural artifices raised by the parties involved; the prosecutor Vipper was not up to the standard of the group of brilliant lawyers—Gruzenberg, Karabtchevski, Maklakov, Zaroudny—who did not fail to demand that the blunders he uttered be recorded in the minutes, for example: the course of this trial is hampered by “Jewish gold”; “they [the Jews in general] seem to laugh at us, see, we have committed a crime, but no one will dare to hold us accountable.”[84] (Not surprisingly, during the trial, Vipper received threatening letters—on some were drawn a slipknot—and not just him, but the civil parties, the expert of the prosecution, probably also the defence lawyers; the dean of the jury also feared for his life.) There was a lot of turmoil around the trial, selling passes for access to hearings, all of Kiev’s educated people were boiling. The man in the street, him, remained indifferent.

A detailed medical examination was carried out. Several professors spread their differences as to whether or not Yushchinsky had remained alive until the last wound, and how acute were the sufferings he had endured. But it was the theological-scientific expertise that was at the centre of the trial: it focused on the very principle of the possibility of ritual murders perpetrated by Jews, and it was on this that the whole world focused its attention.[85] The defence appealed to recognised authorities in the field of Hebraism, such as Rabbi Maze, a specialist in the Talmud. The expert appointed by the Orthodox Church, Professor I. Troitsky of the Theological Academy of Petersburg, concluded his intervention by rejecting the accusation of an act of cold blood attributable to the Jews; he pointed out that the Orthodox Church had never made such accusations, that these were peculiar to the Catholic world. (Bikerman later recalled that in Imperial Russia the police officers themselves cut short “almost every year” rumours about the Christian blood shed during the Jewish Passover, “otherwise we would have had a ‘case of ritual murder’ not once every few decades, but every year.”[86] The main expert cited by the prosecution was the Catholic priest Pranaitis. To extend the public debate, the prosecutors demanded that previous ritual murder cases be examined, but the defence succeeded in rejecting the motion. These discussions on whether the murder was ritual or not ritual only further increased the emotion that the trial had created through the whole world.

But it was necessary that a judgment should be pronounced—on this accused, and not another—and this mission went to a dull jury composed of peasants painfully supplemented by two civil servants and two petty *bourgeois*; all were

exhausted by a month of trials, they fell asleep during the reading of the materials of the case, requested that the trial be shortened, four of them solicited permission to return home before its conclusion and some needed medical assistance.

Nevertheless, these jurors judged on the evidence: the accusations against Beilis were unfounded, not proved. And Beilis was acquitted.

And that was the end of it. No new search for the culprits was undertaken, and this strange and tragic murder remained unexplained.

Instead—and this was in the tradition of Russian weakness—it was imagined (not without ostentation) to erect a chapel on the very spot where the corpse of young Yushchinsky had been discovered, but this project provoked many protests, because it was judged reactionary. And Rasputin dissuaded the tsar from following up on it.[87]

This trial, heavy and ill-conducted, with a white-hot public opinion for a whole year, in Russia as in the rest of the world, was rightly considered a battle of Tsou-Shima.[*] It was reported in the European press that the Russian government had attacked the Jewish people, but that it was not the latter that had lost the war, it was the Russian State itself.

As for the Jews, with all their passion, they were never to forgive this affront of the Russian monarchy. The *fact* that the law had finally triumphed did nothing to change their feelings.

It would be instructive, however, to compare the Beilis trial with another that took place at the same time (1913-15) in Atlanta, USA; a trial which then made great noise: the Jew Leo Frank, also accused of the murder of a child (a girl raped and murdered), and again with very uncertain charges. He was condemned to be hung, and during the proceedings of cassation an armed crowd snatched him from his prison and hanged him.[88] On the *individual* level, the comparison is in favour of Russia. But the Leo Frank affair had but little echo in public opinion, and did not become an object of reproach.

*

There is an epilogue in the Beilis case.

"Threatened with revenge by extreme right-wing groups, Beilis left Russia and went to Palestine with his family. In 1920 he moved to the United States. He died of natural causes, at the age of sixty, in the vicinity of New York.[89]

Justice Minister Shcheglovitov (according to some sources, he had "given instructions for the case to be elucidated as a ritual murder"[90]) was shot by the Bolsheviks.

In 1919 the trial of Vera Cheberyak took place. It did not proceed according to the abhorred procedures of tsarism—no question of popular jury!—and lasted only about forty minutes in the premises of the Cheka of Kiev. A member of the latter, who was arrested in the same year by the Whites, noted in his testimony that "Vera Cheberyak was interrogated exclusively by Jewish Chekists, beginning with Sorine" [the head of the Blumstein Cheka]. Commander Faierman "subjected her to humiliating treatment, ripped off her clothes and struck her with the barrel of his revolver… She said: 'You can do whatever you want with me, but what I said, I will not come back on it… What I said at the Beilis trial, nobody pushed me to say it, nobody bribed me…'" She was shot on the spot.[91]

In 1919, Vipper, now a Soviet official, was discovered in Kaluga and tried by the Moscow Revolutionary Tribunal. The Bolshevik prosecutor Krylenko pronounced the following words: "Whereas he presents a real danger to the Republic… that there be one Vipper less among us!" (This macabre joke suggested that R. Vipper, a professor of medieval history, was still alive.) However, the Tribunal merely sent Vipper "to a concentration camp… until the communist regime be definitively consolidated."[92] After that, we lose his track.

*

Beilis was acquitted by peasants, those Ukrainian peasants accused of having participated in the pogroms against the Jews at the turn of the century, and who were soon to know the collectivisation and organised famine of 1932-33—a famine that journalists have ignored and that has not been included in the liabilities of this regime.

Here is yet another of these footsteps of History…

Footnotes

1. JE, t. 5, p. 100.
2. RJE, t. 1, p. 392.
3. JE, t. 7, p. 370.
4. JE, t. 7, p. 371.
5. *G. B. Sliosberg*, t. 3, p. 200.
6. SJE, p. 349
7. *Ibidem*, pp. 398-399.
8. *V. V. Choulguine*, "Chto nam v nikh ne nravitsa…", Ob Antisemitism v Rossii ("What we do not like about them…" On anti-Semitism in Russia), Paris, 1929, p. 207.
9. *A. Tyrkova-Williams*, Na poutiakh k svobode (The Paths to Freedom), New York, ed. Chekov, 1952, pp. 303-304.
10. *V. A. Obolensky*, Moïa jizn. Moi sovremenniki (My life, My contemporaries), Paris, YMCA Press. 1988, p. 335.
11. SJE, t. 7, p. 349.
12. Retch (The Word), 1907, 7 (19) January, p. 2.
13. JE, t. 7, p. 371.
14. *V. A. Maklakov*, 1905-1906 gody (1905-1906)—M. Winaver i ruskaya obchtchestvennost nachala XX veka (M. Winaver and the Russian public opinion at the beginning of the twentieth century), Paris, 1937, p. 94.
15. JE, t. 7, p. 372.
16. JE, t. 2, pp. 749-751.
17. JE, t. 7, p. 373.
18. SJE, t. 7, p. 351.
19. Perepiska N. A. Romanova and P. A. Solypina (Correspondence between N. A. Romanov and P. A. Stolypin), Krasnyi Arkhiv, 1924, vol. 5, p. 105; See also SJE, t. 7, p. 351
20. *S. E. Kryjanorski*, Vospominania (Memoirs), Berlin, Petropolis, pp. 94-95.
21. SJE, t. 7, p. 351.
22. JE, t. 7, p. 373.
23. *Nikolai Berdyaev*, Filosofia neravenstva (The Philosophy of Inequality), Paris, YMCA Press, 1970, p. 72.
24. *Sliosberg*, t. 3, p. 247.
25. JE, t. 7, pp. 373-374.
26. *A. A. Goldenweiser*, Pravovoe polojenie ievreyev v Rossii (The legal position of Jews in Russia), [Sb.] Kniga o ruskom evreïstve Ot 1860 godov do Revolutsii 1917 g. (Aspects of the History of Russian Jews), in BJWR-1, p. 132; RJE, L 1, p. 212, t. 2, p. 99.

- Dissenting Cadet Party, founded by Guchkov, demanding the strict application of 30 October Manifesto.

27. Third Duma, Stenographic Record of Debates, 1911, p. 2958.
28. JE, t. 7, p. 375.
29. SJE, t. 7, p. 353.
30. Novoie Vremia, 1911, 8 (21) Sept., p. 4.
31. *Ibidem*, 10 (23) Sept., p. 4.
32. *Tyrkova-Williams*, pp. 340-342.
33. *Sliosberg*, t. 3, pp. 186-187.
34. *S. P. Melgunov*, Vospominania i dnevniki. Vyp. I (Memoirs and Journal, 1), Paris, 1964, p. 88.
35. SJE, t. 7, p. 517.

- Nationalist mass organisation founded in October 1905 by Dr. Dubrovin and Vladimir Purishkevich.

36. *Ibidem*, p. 351; RJE, t. 1, pp. 290, 510.

37. RJE, t. 1, p. 361.
38. Novoie Vremia, 1917, 21 April (4 May); as well as other newspapers.
39. RJE, t. 1, p. 373.
40. *S. I. Witte*, Vopominania. TsarsLvoanie Nikolaïa II (Memoirs, The reign of Nicholas II) in 2 vols., Berlin, Slovo, 1922, t. 2, p. 54.
41. The Kievian, 1905, 17 Nov. in *Choulguine*, Annexes, pp. 285-286.
42. Iz dncvnika L. Tikhomirova (Excerpts from the diary of L. Tikhomirov). Krasny Arkhiv, 1936, t. 74, pp. 177-179.
43. Boris Bougayev (Andrei Bely), Chtempelevennaïa kultura (The Obliterated Culture), Viesy, 1909, no. 9, pp. 75-77.
44. *Vl. Jabotinsky*, Dezertiry i khoziaieva (Deserters and Masters), Felietony, Spb, 1913, pp. 75-76.
45. *A. Koulicher*, Ob otvetstvennosti i bezotvetstvennosti (responsibility and irresponsibility). Ievsreiskaya tribouna, Paris, 1923, no. 7 (160), 6 April, p. 4.
46. *Witte*, t. 2, p. 55.
47. Stenographic Record of the Debates in the Third Duma, 1911, p. 2911.
48. *Vl. Jabotinsky*, Homo homini lupus, Felietony, pp. 111-113.
49. JE, t. 9, p. 314.
50. JE, t. 13, pp. 622-625.
51. JE, t. 5, p. 822.
52. SJE, t. 5, p. 315.
53. JE, t. 13, p. 55.
54. SJE, t. 7, p. 352.
55. *S. V. Pozner*, Ievrei v obschechei chkole… (The Jews in the Public School…), SPb, Razoum, 1914, p. 54.
56. SJE, t. 6, p. 854; t. 7, p. 352.
57. JE, t. 13, pp. 55-58.
58. *I. M. Troitsky*, Ievrei vrusskoï chkole (The Jews and the Russian School), in BJWR-1, pp. 358, 360.
59. *K. A. Krivoshein*, A. V. Krivoshein (1857-1921) Evo znatchenie v istorii Rossii natchal XX veka (A. V. Krivoshein: his role in the history of Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century), Paris, 1973, pp. 290, 292.
60. JE, t. 7, p. 757.
61. *M. Bernadski*, Ievrci I ruskoye narodnoïe khoziaïstvo (The Jews and the Russian economy), in Chtchit literatourny sbornik / pod red. L. Andreeva, M. Gorkovo and E Sologouba. 3-e izd., Dop., M. Rousskoye Obchtchestvo dlia izoutchenia ievreiskoi jisni, 1916. pp. 28, 30; SJE, t. 7, p. 386.
62. *Bernadski*, Chtchit, pp. 30, 31.
63. RJE, t. 1, p. 536.
64. *Krivoshein*, pp. 292-293.
65. *Choulguine*, p. 74.
66. *Bernadski*, pp. 27. 28.
67. *I. M. Bikerman*, Rossia i ruskoye Ivreisstvo (Russia and its Jewish Community), in Rossia i ievrei (The Conservative and Destructive Elements among the Jews), in RaJ, p. 33.
68. *D. S. Pasmanik*, Ruskaya revolutsia i ievreisstvo (Bolshevik i iudaism) (The Russian Revolution and the Jews [Bolshevism and Judaism]), Paris. 1923, pp. 195-196.
69. *D. S. Pasmanik*, Tchevo je my dobivaïemsia? (But what do we want?), RaJ, p. 218.
70. SJE, t. 7, pp. 384-385.
71. Novoie Vremia, 1911, 10 (23) Sept., p. 4.
72. *Sliosberg*, t. 3, p. 249.
73. *Ibidem*.
74. Perepiska V. V. Rozanova and M. O. Gerschenzona (The correspondence of V. V. Rozanov and M. O. Gerschenzon), Novy mir. 1991, no. 3, p. 232.
75. *Vladimir Bogrov*, Drnitri Bogrov I oubiestvo Stolypina… (Dmitri Bogrov and the assassination of Stolypin…), Berlin, 1931.

- In *The Red Wheel*, First Knot, *August Fourteen*, ed. Fayard / Seuil.

76. *A. Guchkov*, Retch v Gosudarstvennoi Doume 15 Oct. 1911 (Address to the Duma of 15 Oct. 1911)—A. I. Goutchkov v Tretieï Gosoudarstvennoï Doume (1907-1912), Sbornik retchei (Collection of speeches delivered by A. Guchkov to The Third Duma), Spb, 1912, p. 163.

- See *infra*, following pages.
    - The famous forgery of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion.

77. *Sliosberg**, t. 2, pp. 283-284.
78. *R. Nudelman*, Doklad na seminare: Sovetskii antisemitizm—pritchiny i prognozy (Presentation at the seminar: Soviet antisemitism

—causes and prognoses), in “22”, review of the Jewish intelligentsia of the USSR in Israel, Tel Aviv, 1978, no. 3, p. 145.

79. Protsess Beilisa v otsenke Departamenta politsii (The Beilis trial seen by the Police Department), Krasny Arkhiv, 1931, t. 44, pp. 85-125.

- See *supra*, chapter 9.

80. *Sliosberg*, t. 3, pp. 23-24, 37.
81. Stenographic Record of the Debates at the Third Duma, 1911, pp. 3119-3120.
82. *V. V. Rozanov*, Oboniatelnoye i osiazatelnoye otnochenie ievreyev krovi (The Olfactory and Tactile Relationship of the Jews to Blood), Stockholm, 1934, p. 110.

- Vladimir Bonch-Bruevich (1873-1955), sociologist, publisher, publicist very attached to Lenin, collaborator of Pravda, specialist in religious matters.

83. *N. V. Krylenko*, Za piat let. 1918-1922: Obvinitelnye retchi. (Five years, 1918-1922: Indictments…), M., 1923, p. 359.
84. *Ibidem*, pp. 356, 364.
85. Retch, 1913, 26 Oct. (8 Nov.), p. 3
86. *Bikerman*, RaJ, p. 29
87. Sliosberg, t. 3, p. 47.

- An allusion to the terrible naval reverse suffered by Russia in its war against Japan (27-28 May 1905).

88. *V. Lazaris*, Smert Leo Franka (Death of Leo Frank), in “22”, 1984, no. 36, pp. 155-159.
89. SJE, t. 1, pp. 317, 318.
90. *Ibidem*, p. 317.
91. Chekist o Tcheka (A Chekist speaks of the Cheka). Na tchoujoï storone: Istoriko literatournye sborniki / pod red. S. P. Melgounova, t. 9. Berlin: Vataga; Prague: Plamia, 1925, pp. 118, 135.
92. *Krylenko*, pp. 367-368

Chapter 11

Jews and Russians before the First World War: The Growing Awareness

In Russia—for another ten years it escaped its ruin—the best minds among the Russians and the Jews had had time to look back and evaluate from different points of view the essence of our common life, to seriously consider the question of culture and national destiny.

The Jewish people made its way through an ever-changing present by dragging behind it the tail of a comet of three thousand years of diaspora, without ever losing consciousness of being "a nation without language nor territory, but with its own laws" (Salomon Lourie), preserving its difference and its specificity by the force of its religious and national tension—in the name of a superior, meta-historical Providence. Have the Jews of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries sought to identify with the peoples who surrounded them, to blend into them? It was certainly the Jews of Russia who, longer than their other co-religionists, had remained in the core of isolation, concentrated on their religious life and conscience. But, from the end of the nineteenth century, it was precisely this Jewish community in Russia that began to grow stronger, to flourish, and now "the whole history of the Jewish community in the modern age was placed under the sign of Russian Jewry", which also manifested "a sharp sense of the movement of History."[1]

For their part, the Russian thinkers were perplexed by the particularism of the Jews. And for them, in the nineteenth century, the question was how to *overcome* it. Vladimir Solovyov, who expressed deep sympathy for the Jews, proposed to do so by the love of the Russians towards the Jews.

Before him, Dostoyevsky had noticed the disproportionate fury provoked by his remarks, certainly offensive but very scarce, about the Jewish people: "This fury is a striking testimony to the way the Jews themselves regard the Russians… and that, in the motives of our differences with the Jews, it is perhaps not only the Russian people who bears all the responsibility, but that these motives, obviously, have accumulated on both sides, and it cannot be said on which side there is the most."[2]

From this same end of the nineteenth century, Teitel reports the following observation: "The Jews are in their majority materialists. Strong in them is the aspiration to acquire material goods. But what contempt for these material goods whenever it comes to the inner 'I', to national dignity! Why, in fact, the mass of Jewish youth—who has completely turned away from religious practice, which often does not even speak its mother tongue—why did this mass, if only for the sake of form, not convert to Orthodoxy, which would have opened to it wide the doors of all the universities and would have given it access to all the goods of the earth?" Even the thirst for knowledge was not enough, while "science, superior knowledge was held by them in higher esteem than fortune." What held them back was the concern not to abandon their co-religionists in need. (He also adds that going to Europe to study was not a good solution either: "Jewish students felt very uncomfortable in the West… The German Jew considered them undesirable, insecure people, noisy, disorderly,"; and this attitude was not only that of the German Jews, "the French and Swiss Jews were no exception."[3]

As for D. Pasmanik, he also mentioned this category of Jews converted under duress, who felt only more resentment towards the power and could only oppose it. (From 1905, conversion was facilitated: it was no longer necessary to go to orthodoxy, it was enough to become a Christian, and Protestantism was more acceptable to many Jews. In 1905 was also repealed the prohibition to return to Judaism.[4])

Another writer bitterly concluded, in 1924, that in the last decades preceding the revolution it was not only "the Russian government… which definitely ranked the Jewish people among the enemies of the country", but "even worse, it was a lot of Jewish politicians who ranked themselves among these enemies, radicalising their position and ceasing to differentiate between the 'government' and the fatherland, that is, Russia… The indifference of the Jewish masses and their leaders to the destiny of Great Russia was a fatal political error."[5]

Of course, like any social process, this—and, moreover, in a context as diverse and mobile as the Jewish milieu—did not take place linearly, it was split; in the hearts of many educated Jews, it provoked rifts. On the one hand, "belonging to the Jewish people confers a specific position in the whole of the Russian milieu."[6] But to observe immediately a "remarkable ambivalence: the traditional sentimental attachment of many Jews to the surrounding Russian world, their rootedness in this world, and at the same time an intellectual rejection, a refusal across the board. Affection for an abhorred world."[7]

This approach so painfully ambivalent could not fail to lead to equally painfully ambivalent results. And when I. V. Hessen, in an intervention in the second Duma in March 1907, after having denied that the revolution was still in its phase of rising violence, thus denying right-wing parties the right to arise as defenders of the culture against anarchy, exclaimed: "We who are teachers, doctors, lawyers, statisticians, literary men, would we be the enemies of culture? Who will believe you, gentlemen?"—They shouted from the benches of the right: "You are the enemies of Russian culture, not of Jewish culture!"[8] Enemies, of course not, why go so far, but—as the Russian party pointed out—are you really, unreservedly, our friends? The rapprochement was made difficult precisely by this: how could these brilliant advocates, professors and doctors not have in their heart of hearts primarily Jewish sympathies? Could they feel, entirely and unreservedly, Russian by spirit? Hence the problem was even more complicated. Were they able to take to heart the interests of the Russian State in their full scope and depth?

During this same singular period, we see on the one hand that the Jewish middle classes make a very clear choice to give secular education to their children in the Russian language, and on the other there is the development of publications in Yiddish—and comes into use the term "Yiddishism": that the Jews remain Jewish, that they do not assimilate.

There was still a path to assimilation, doubtlessly marginal, but not negligible: that of mixed marriages. And also a current of superficial assimilation consisting in adapting artificial pseudonyms to the Russian way. (And who did this most often?! The great sugar producers of Kiev "Dobry"[*], "Babushkin"[**], prosecuted during the war for agreement with the enemy. The editor "Iasny"[***] that even the newspaper of constitutional-democrat orientation *Retch* called an "avid speculator", an "unscrupulous shark."[9] Or the future Bolshevik D. Goldenbach, who regarded "all of Russia as a country without worth" but disguised himself as "Riazanov" to bother the readers with his Marxist theoretician ratiocinations until his *arrest* in 1937.)

And it was precisely during these decades, and especially in Russia, that Zionism developed. The Zionists were ironical about those who wanted to assimilate, who imagined that the fate of the Jews of Russia was indissolubly linked to the destiny of Russia itself.

And then, we must turn first to Vl. Jabotinsky, a brilliant and original essayist, who was brought, in the years preceding the revolution, to express not only his rejection of Russia but also his despair. Jabotinsky considered that Russia was nothing more than a halt for the Jews on their historical journey and that it was necessary to hit the road—to Palestine.

Passion ignited his words: it is not with the Russian people that we are in contact, we learn to know it through its culture, "mainly through its writers…, through the highest, the purest manifestations of the Russian spirit,"—and this appreciation, we transpose it to the whole of the Russian world. "Many of us, born of the Jewish intelligentsia, love the Russian culture with a maddening and degrading love… with the degrading love of swine keepers for a queen." As for the Jewish world, we discover it through the baseness and ugliness of everyday life.[10]

He is merciless towards those who seek to assimilate. "Many of the servile habits that developed in our psychology as our intelligentsia became russified," "have ruined the hope or the desire to keep Jewishness intact, and lead to its disappearance." The average Jewish intellectual forgets himself: it is better not to pronounce the word "Jew", "the times are no longer about that"; we are afraid to write: "we the Jews", but we write: "we the Russians" and even: "we the Russkoffs". "The Jew can occupy a prominent place in Russian society, but he will always remain a second class Russian," and this, all the more so because he retains a specific 'inclination of the soul'."—We are witnessing an epidemic of baptisms for interest, sometimes for stakes far more petty than obtaining a diploma. "The thirty pennies for

equal rights…” When abjuring our faith, strip yourself also of our nationality.[11]

The situation of the Jews in Russia—and not at any time, but precisely after the years 1905–1906—seemed to him desperately gloomy: “The objective reality, that is, the fact of living abroad, has turned itself against our people today, and we are weak and helpless.”—“Already in the past we knew we were surrounded by enemies”; “this prison” (Russia), “a pack of dogs”; “the body lying, covered with the wounds of the Jewish people of Russia, tracked, surrounded by enemies and defenceless”; “six million human beings swarming in a deep pit…, a slow torture, a pogrom that does not end”; and even, according to him, “newspapers financed by Jewish funds” do not defend the Jews “in these times of unprecedented persecution.” At the end of 1911, he wrote: “For several years now the Jews of Russia have been crammed on the bench of the accused”, despite the fact we are not revolutionaries, that “we have not sold Russia to the Japanese” and that we are not Azefs[*] or Bogrovs[**]”; and in connection with Bogrov: “This unfortunate young man —he was what he was—, at the hour of such an admirable death[!], was booed by a dozen brutes from the cesspool of the Kievian Black Hundreds, come to ensure that the execution had indeed taken place.”[12]

And, returning again and again to the Jewish community itself: “Today we are culturally deprived, as at the bottom of a slum, of an obscure impasse.”—“What we suffer above all is contempt for ourselves; what we need above all is to respect ourselves… The study of Jewishness must become for us the central discipline… Jewish culture is now the only plank of salvation for us.”[13]

All of this, we can, yes, we can understand it, share it. (And we, Russians, can do it, especially today, at the end of the twentieth century.)

It does not condemn those who, in the past, have campaigned for assimilation: in the course of History “there are times when assimilation is undeniably desirable, when it represents a necessary stage of progress.” This was the case after the sixties of the nineteenth century, when the Jewish intelligentsia was still in its embryonic state, beginning to adapt to the surrounding environment, to a culture that had reached maturity. At that time, assimilation did not mean “denying the Jewish people, but on the contrary, taking the first step on the road to autonomous national activity, taking a first step towards renewal and rebirth of the nation.” It was necessary to “assimilate what was foreign to us in order to be able to develop with new energy what was our own.” But half a century later, many radical transformations took place both inside and outside the Jewish world. The desire to appropriate universal knowledge has become widespread as never before. And it is then, now, that must be inculcated to the younger generations the *Jewish* principles. It is now that there is a threat of an irremediable dilution in the foreign environment: “There is no day that passes in which our sons do not leave us” and “do not become strangers to us”; “enlightened by the Enlightenment, our children serve all the peoples of the Earth, except ours; no one is there to work for the Jewish cause.” “The world around us is too magnificent, too spacious and too rich”—we cannot admit that it diverts Jewish youth from “the ugliness of the daily existence of the Jews… The deepening of national values of Jewishness must become the main axis… of Jewish education.”—“Only the bond of solidarity allows a nation to hold” (we ourselves would need it!—A. S.), while denial slows down the struggle for the right of the Jews: one imagines that there is a way out, and “we leave… lately… in compact masses, with lightness and cynicism.”[14]

Then, letting himself be carried away: “The royal spirit [of Israel] in all its power, its tragic history in all its grandiose magnificence…” “Who are we to justify ourselves before them? Who are they to demand accountability?”[15]

The latter formula, we can also respect it fully. But under the condition of reciprocity. Especially since it is not up to any nation or religion to *judge* another.

The calls to return to Jewish *roots* did not remain unheeded in those years. In Saint Petersburg, before the revolution, “we could note in the circles of the Russo-Jewish intelligentsia a very great interest in Jewish history.”[16] In 1908, the Jewish Historical-Ethnographic Commission expanded into a Jewish Historical-Ethnographic Society,[17] headed by M. Winaver. It worked actively and efficiently to collect the archives on the history and ethnography of the Jews of Russia and Poland—nothing comparable was established by Jewish historical science in the West. The magazine *The Jewish Past*, led by S. Dubnov, then was created.[18] At the same time began the publication of the *Jewish*

Encyclopædia in sixteen volumes (which we use extensively in this study), and the *History of the Jewish People* in fifteen volumes. It is true that in the last volume of the *Jewish Encyclopædia*, its editors complain that "the elite of the Jewish intelligentsia has shown its indifference to the cultural issues raised by this *Encyclopædia*," devoting itself exclusively to the struggle for the equality—all formal—of rights for the Jews.[19]

Meanwhile, on the contrary, in other minds and other Jewish hearts there was a growing conviction that the future of the Jews of Russia was indissolubly linked to that of Russia. Although "scattered over an immense territory and among a foreign world…, the Russian Jewish community had and was conscious of being a unique whole. Because unique was the environment that surrounded us…, unique its culture… This unique culture, we absorbed it throughout the whole country."[20]

"The Jews of Russia have always been able to align their own interests to those of all the Russian people. And this did not come from any nobility of character or a sense of gratitude, but from a perception of historical realities." Open controversy with Jabotinsky: "Russia is not, for the millions of Jews who populate it, a step among others on the historical path of the wandering Jew… The contribution of Russian Jews to the international Jewish community has been and will be the most significant. There is no salvation for us without Russia, as there is no salvation for Russia without us."[21]

This interdependence is affirmed even more categorically by the deputy of the second and third Dumas, O. I. Pergament: "No improvement of the internal situation of Russia 'is possible without the simultaneous enfranchisement of the Jews from the yoke of inequality'."[22]

And there, one cannot ignore the exceptional personality of the jurist G. B. Sliosberg: among the Jews he was one of those who, for decades, had the closest relations with the Russian State, sometimes as Deputy to the Principal Secretary of the Senate, sometimes as a consultant to the Ministry of the Interior, but to whom many Jews reproached his habit of *asking* the authorities for rights for the Jews, when the time had come *demand* them. He writes in his memoirs: "From childhood, I have become accustomed to consider myself above all as a Jew. But from the beginning of my conscious life I also felt like a son of Russia… Being a good Jew does not mean that one is not a good Russian citizen."[23]—"In our work, we were not obliged to overcome the obstacles encountered at every step by the Jews of Poland because of the Polish authorities… In the Russian political and administrative system, we Jews did not represent a foreign element, insofar as, in Russia, cohabited many nationalities. The cultural interests of Russia did not conflict in any way with the cultural interests of the Jewish community. These two cultures were somewhat complementary."[24] He even added this somewhat humorous remark: the legislation on Jews was so confusing and contradictory that in the 90s, "it was necessary to create a specific jurisprudence for the Jews using purely Talmudic methods."[25]

And again, in a higher register: "The easing of the national yoke which has been felt in recent years, shortly before Russia entered a tragic period in its history, bore in the hearts of all Russian Jews the hope that the Russian Jewish consciousness would gradually take a creative path, that of reconciling the Jewish and Russian aspects in the synthesis of a higher unity."[26]

And can we forget that, among the seven authors of the incomparable *Milestones*[*], three were Jews: M. O. Gershenzon, A. S. Izgoev-Lande, and S. L. Frank?

But there was reciprocity: in the decades preceding the revolution, the Jews benefited from the massive and unanimous support of progressive circles. Perhaps the amplitude of this support is due to a context of bullying and pogroms, but it has never been so complete in any other country (and perhaps never in all the past centuries). Our intelligentsia was so generous, so freedom-loving, that it ostracised anti-Semitism from society and humanity; moreover, the one who did not give his frank and massive support to the struggle for equal rights of the Jews, who did not make it a priority, was considered a "despicable anti-Semite". With its ever-awakening moral consciousness and extreme sensitivity, the Russian intelligentsia sought to understand and assimilate the Jewish view of priorities affecting the whole of political life: is deemed progressive all that is a reaction against the persecution of the Jews, all the rest is reactionary. Not only did Russian society firmly defend the Jews against the government, but it forbade itself and

forbade anyone to show any trace of a shadow of criticism of the conduct of each Jew in particular: and if this bore anti-Semitism within me? (The generation formed at that time retained these principles for decades.)

V. A. Maklakov evokes in his memoirs a significant episode that occurred during the congress of the Zemstvos in 1905, when the wave of pogroms against the Jews and intellectuals had just swept through and began to rise in strength the pogroms directed against landowners. "E. V. de Roberti proposed not to extend the amnesty [demanded by the congress] to the crimes related to violence against children and women." He was immediately suspected of wanting to introduce a "class" amendment, that is to say, to concern himself with the families of the noble victims of pogroms. "E. de Roberti hastened… to reassure everybody: 'I had absolutely no plan in regard to the property of the noblemen… Five or twenty properties burned down, this has no importance. I have in view the mass of immovable property and houses belonging to Jews, which were burned and pillaged by the Black Hundreds'."[27]

During the terror of 1905–1907, Gerzenstein (who had been ironic about the property fires of the noblemen) and Iollos were considered as martyrs, but no one among the thousands of other innocent victims, were considered so. In *The Last Autocrat*, a satirical publication that the Russian liberals published abroad, they succeeded in placing the following legend under the portrait of the general whom the terrorist Hirsch Lekkert had attempted in vain to assassinate: "*Because of him*"[I emphasise—A. S.], the tsar "had executed… the Jew Lekkert."[28]

It was not just the parties of the opposition, it was the whole mass of middle-class civil servants who were trembling at the idea of sounding like "non-progressives". It was necessary to enjoy a good personal fortune, or possess remarkable freedom of mind, to resist with courage the pressure of general opinion. As for the world of the bar, of art, of science, ostracism immediately struck anyone who moved away from this magnetic field.

Only Leo Tolstoy, who enjoyed a unique position in society, could afford to say that, *for him*, the Jewish question was in the 81st place.

The *Jewish Encyclopædia* complained that the pogroms of October 1905 "provoked in the progressive intelligentsia a protestation that was not specific [i.e., exclusively Jewish-centred], but general, oriented towards all manifestations of the 'counter-revolution' in all its forms."[29]

Moreover, Russian society would have ceased to be itself if it had not brought everything to a single burning question: tsarism, still tsarism, always tsarism!

But the consequence was this: "After the days of October [the pogroms of 1905], concrete aid to the Jewish victims was brought only by the Jews of Russia and other countries."[30] And Berdyaev added: "Are you capable of feeling the soul of the Jewish people?… No, you are fighting… in favour of an abstract humanity."[31]

This is confirmed by Sliosberg: "In politically evolved circles," the Jewish question "was not political in the broad sense of the term. Society was attentive to manifestations of the reaction in all its forms."[32]

In order to correct this misjudgement of Russian society, a collection of articles entitled *Shchit* [The Shield] was published in 1915: it took on globally and exclusively the defence of the Jews, but without the participation of the latter as writers, these were either Russian or Ukrainian, and a beautiful skewer of celebrities of the time was assembled there —nearly forty names.[33] The whole collection was based on a single theme: "Jews in Russia"; it is univocal in its conclusions and its formulations denote in some places a certain spirit of sacrifice.

A few samples—*L. Andreev*: "The prospect of an approaching solution to the Jewish problem brings about a feeling of 'joy close to fervour', the feeling of being freed from a pain that has accompanied me all my life," which was like "a hump on the back"; "I breathed poisonous air…"—*M. Gorky*: "The great European thinkers consider that the psychic structure of the Jew is culturally higher, more beautiful than that of the Russian." (He then rejoiced at the development in Russia of the sect of the Sabbatists and that of the "New Israel".)—*P. Maliantovitch*: "The arbitrariness to which the Jews are subjected is a reproach which, like a stain, covers the name of the Russian people… The best among the Russians feel it as a shame that pursues you all your life. We are barbarians among the civilised peoples of

humanity… we are deprived of the precious right to be proud of our people… The struggle for the equal rights of the Jews represents for the Russian man… a national cause of prime importance… The arbitrariness subjected to the Jews condemns the Russians to failure in their attempts to attain their own happiness." If we do not worry about the liberation of the Jews, "we will never be able to solve our own problems."—*K. Arseniev*: "If we remove everything that hinders the Jews, we will see 'an increase in the intellectual forces of Russia'."—*A. Kalmykova*: "On the one hand, our 'close spiritual relationship with the Jewish world in the domain of the highest spiritual values'; on the other, 'the Jews may be the object of contempt, of hatred'."—*L. Andreev*: "It is we, the Russians, who are the *Jews of Europe*; our *border*, it is precisely the *Pale of Settlement*."—*D. Merezhkovsky*: "What do the Jews expect of us? Our moral indignation? But this indignation is so strong and so simple… that we only have to scream with the Jews. This is what we do."—By the effect of I am not sure which misunderstanding, Berdyaev is not one of the authors of the *Shield*. But he said of himself that he had broken with his milieu from his earliest youth and that he preferred to frequent the Jews.

All the authors of the *Shield* define anti-Semitism as an ignoble feeling, as "a disease of consciousness, obstinate and contagious" (D. Ovsianikov-Kulikovsky, Academician). But at the same time, several authors note that "the methods and processes… of anti-Semites [Russians] are of foreign origin" (P. Milyukov). "The latest cry of anti-Semitic ideology is a product of the German industry of the spirit… The 'Aryan' theory… has been taken up by our nationalist press… Menshikov[*] [copies] the ideas of Gobineau" (F. Kokochkin). The doctrine of the superiority of the Aryans in relation to the Semites is "of German manufacture" (see Ivanov).

But for us, with our hump on our backs, what does it change? Invited by the "Progressive Circle" at the end of 1916, Gorky "devoted the two hours of his lecture to rolling the Russian people in the mud and raising the Jews to the skies," as noted by the Progressive deputy Mansyrev, one of the founders of the "Circle".[34]

A contemporary Jewish writer analyses this phenomenon objectively and lucidly: "We assisted to a profound transformation of the minds of the cultivated Russians who, unfortunately, took to heart the Jewish problem much more greatly than might have been expected… Compassion for the Jews was transformed into an imperative almost as categorical as the formula 'God, the Tsar, the Fatherland'"; as for the Jews, "they took advantage of this profession of faith according to their degree of cynicism."[35] At the same time, Rozanov spoke of "the avid desire of the Jews to seize everything."[36]

In the 20s, V. Choulguine summed it up as follows: "At that time [a quarter of a century before the revolution], the Jews had taken control of the political life of the country… The brain of the nation (if we except the government and the circles close to it) found itself in the hands of the Jews and was accustomed to think according to their directives." "Despite all the 'restrictions' on their rights, the Jews had taken possession of the soul of the Russian people."[37]

But was it the Jews who had seized the Russian soul or did the Russians simply not know what to do with it?

Still in *the Shield*, Merezhkovsky tried to explain that philo-Semitism had arisen in reaction to anti-Semitism, that the blind valourisation of a foreign nationality was asserted, that the absolutisation of the "no" led to that of the "yes".[38] And Professor Baudouin de Courtenay acknowledged that "many, even among the 'political friends' of the Jews, experience repulsion and acknowledge it in private. Here, of course, there is nothing to do. Sympathy and antipathy… are not commanded." We must nevertheless rely "not on affects, but on reason."[39]

The confusion that reigned in the minds of those days was brought to light with greater significance and reach by P. B. Struve, who devoted his entire life to breaking down the obstacles erected on the path that would lead him from Marxism to the rule of law, and, along the way, also obstacles of other kinds. The occasion was a polemic—fallen into a deep oblivion, but of great historical importance—which broke out in the liberal *Slovo* newspaper in March 1909 and immediately won the entirety of the Russian press.

Everything had begun with the "Chirikov affair", an episode whose importance was inflated to the extreme: an explosion of rage in a small literary circle accusing Chirikov—author of a play entitled *The Jews*, and well disposed towards them—to be anti-Semitic. (And this because at a dinner of writers he had let himself go on to say that most of the literary critics of Saint Petersburg were Jews, but were they able to understand the reality of Russian life?) This

affair shook many things in Russian society. (The journalist Lioubosh wrote about it: “It is the two kopeck candle that set fire to Moscow.”)

Considering that he had not sufficiently expressed himself on the Chrikov affair in a first article, Jabotinsky published a text entitled “Asemitism” in the *Slovo* newspaper on 9 March 1909. He stated in it his fears and his indignation at the fact that the majority of the progressive press wanted to silence this matter. That even a great liberal newspaper (he was referring to the *Russian News*) had not published a word for twenty-five years on “the atrocious persecutions suffered by the Jewish people… Since then the law of silence has been regarded as the latest trend by progressive philo-Semites.” It was precisely here that evil resided: in passing over the Jewish question. (We can only agree with this!) When Chirikov and Arabajine “assure us that there is nothing anti-Semitic in their remarks, they are both perfectly right.” Because of this tradition of silence, “one can be accused of anti-Semitism for having only pronounced the word ‘Jew’ or made the most innocent remark about some particularity of the Jews… The problem is that the Jews have become a veritable taboo that forbids the most trivial criticism, and that it is them that are the big losers in the affair.” (Here again, we can only agree!) “There is a feeling that the word ‘Jew’ itself has become an indecent term.” “There is here an echo of a general state of mind that makes its way among the middle strata of the progressive Russian intelligentsia… We can not yet provide tangible proofs of it, we can only have a presentiment about this state of mind”—, but it is precisely this that torments him: no proofs, just an intuition—and the Jews will not see the storm coming, they will be caught unprepared. For the moment, “we see only a small cloud forming in the sky and we can hear a distant, but already menacing roll.” It is not anti-Semitism, it is only “Asemitism”, but that also is not admissible, neutrality cannot be justified: after the pogrom of Kishinev and while the reactionary press peddles “the inflamed tow of hatred”, the silence of the progressive newspapers about “one of the most tragic questions of Russian life” is unacceptable.[40]

In the editorial of the same issue of *Slovo*, were formulated the following reservations about Jabotinsky’s article: “The accusations made by the author against the progressive press correspond, in our opinion, to the reality of things. We understand the sentiments that have inspired the author with his bitter remarks, but to impute to the Russian intelligentsia the intention, so to speak deliberately, of sweeping the Jewish question under the rug, is unfair. The Russian reality has so many unresolved problems that we cannot devote much space to each one of them… Yet, if many of these problems are resolved, this will have very important effects, including for the Jews who are citizens of our common homeland.”[41]

And if the editorialist of the *Slovo* had then asked Jabotinsky why he did not defend one or the other of those fools who uttered “the most innocent remark about some particularity of the Jews”? Was Jewish opinion interested only in them, did they take their part? Or was it enough to observe how the Russian intelligentsia got rid of these “anti-Semites”? No, the Jews were no less responsible than the others for this “taboo”.

Another article in the same paper helped launch the discussion: “The agreement, not the fusion”, of V. Golubev. Indeed, the Chirikov affair “is far from being an isolated case”, “at the present time… the national question… is also of concern to our intelligentsia”. In the recent past, especially in the year of the revolution[*], our intelligentsia has “sinned very much” by cosmopolitanism. But “the struggles that have been fought within our community and between the nationalities that populate the Russian State have not disappeared without leaving traces.” Like the other nationalities, in those years, “the Russians had to look at their own national question…; when nationalities deprived of sovereignty began to self-determine, the Russians felt the need to do so as well.” Even the history of Russia, “we Russian intellectuals, we know it perhaps less well than European history.” “Universal ideals… have always been more important to us than the edification of our own country.” But, even according to Vladimir Solovyov, who is however very far removed from nationalism, “before being a bearer of universal ideals, it is essential to raise oneself to a certain national level. And the feeling of raising oneself seems to have begun to make its way into our intelligentsia.” Until now, “we have been silent on our own peculiarities.” Remembering them in our memory does not constitute a manifestation of anti-Semitism and oppression of other nationalities: between nationalities there must be “harmony and not fusion”.[42]

The editorial team of the newspaper may have taken all these precautions because it was preparing to publish the following day, 10 March, an article by P. B. Struve, “The intelligentsia and the national face”, which had coincidentally

arrived at the same time than that of Jabotinsky and also dealing with the Chirikov case.

Struve wrote: “This incident,” which will “soon be forgotten”, “has shown that something has moved in the minds, has awakened and will no longer be calmed. And we will have to rely on that.” “The Russian intelligentsia hides its national face, it is an attitude that imposes nothing, which is sterile.”—“Nationality is something much more obvious [than race, colour of skin] and, at the same time, something subtle. It is the attraction and repulsion of the mind and, to become aware of them, it is not necessary to resort to anthropometry or to genealogy. They live and palpitate in the depths of the soul.” One can and must fight to make these attractions/repulsions not be brought into law, “but ‘political’ equity does not require from us ‘national’ indifference.” These attractions and repulsions belong to us, they are our goods”, “the organic feeling of our national belonging… And I do not see the slightest reason… to renounce this property in the name of anyone or anything.”

Yes, insists Struve, it is essential to draw a border between the legal, the political domains and the realm where these sentiments live. “Especially with regard to the Jewish question, it is both very easy and very difficult.”—“The Jewish question is formally a question of law”, and, for this reason, it is easy and natural to help solve it: to grant the Jews equal rights—yes, of course! But at the same time it is “very difficult because the force of rejection towards the Jews in different strata of Russian society is considerable, and it requires great moral force and a very rational mind to, despite this repulsion, resolve definitively this question of right.” However, “even though there is a great force of rejection towards the Jews among large segments of the Russian population, of all the ‘foreigners’ the Jews are those who are closest to us, those who are the most closely linked to us. It is a historico-cultural paradox, but it is so. The Russian intelligentsia has always regarded the Jews as Russians, and it is neither fortuitous nor the effect of a ‘misunderstanding’. The deliberate initiative of rejecting Russian culture and asserting Jewish ‘national’ singularity does not belong to the Russian intelligentsia, but to this movement known as Zionism… I do not feel any sympathy for Zionism, but I understand that the problem of ‘Jewish’ nationality does indeed exist,” and even poses itself more and more. (It is significant that he places “national” and “Jewish” in quotation marks: he still cannot believe that the Jews think of themselves as others.) “There does not exist in Russia other ‘foreigners’ who play a role as important in Russian culture… And here is another difficulty: they play this role while remaining Jews.” One cannot, for example, deny the role of the Germans in Russian culture and science; but by immersing themselves in Russian culture, the Germans completely blend into it. “With the Jews, that’s another matter!”

And he concludes: “We must not deceive [our national feeling] or hide our faces… I have a right, like any Russian, to these feelings… The better it is understood… the less there will be misunderstandings in the future.”[43]

Yes… Oh, if we had woken up, as much as we are, a few decades earlier! (The Jews, they, had awakened long before the Russians.)

But the very next day, it was a whirlwind: as if all the newspapers had waited for that! From the liberal *Hacha Gazeta* (“Is this the right *moment* to talk about this?”) and the right-wing newspaper *Novoie Vremia* to the organ of the Democratic constitutional party *Retch* where Milyukov could not help exclaiming: Jabotinsky “has succeeded in breaking the wall of silence, and all the frightening and threatening things that the progressive press and the intelligentsia had sought to hide from the Jews now appear in their true dimension.” But, later on, argumentative and cold as usual, Milyukov goes on to the verdict. It begins with an important warning: *Where does it lead? Who benefits from it?* The “national face” which, moreover, “we must not hide”, is a step towards the worst of fanaticism! (Thus, the “national face” *must* be hidden.) Thus “the slippery slope of æsthetic nationalism will precipitate the intelligentsia towards its degeneration, towards a true tribal chauvinism” engendered “in the putrid atmosphere of the reaction reigning over today’s society.”[44]

But P. B. Struve, with an almost juvenile agility in spite of his forty years, retaliates as soon as 12 March in the columns of the *Slovo* to the “professorial speech” of Milyukov. And, above all, to this sleight of hand: “Where does it lead?” (“Who benefits from it?” “Who will draw the chestnuts from the fire?”—this is how people will be silenced—whatever they say—for a hundred years or more. There is a falsifying process that denotes a total inability to understand that a speech can be honest and have weight in itself.)—“Our point of view is not refuted on the merits”, but confronted on the polemic mode to “a projection”: “Where does it lead?”[45] (A few days later, he wrote again in the *Slovo*: “It is an old process to discredit both an idea that one does not share and the one who formulates it, insinuating perfidiously that

the people of *Novoie Vremia* or *Russkoye Znamya* will find it quite to their liking. This procedure is, in our opinion, utterly unworthy of a progressive press."[46]) Then, as to the substance: "National questions are, nowadays, associated with powerful, sometimes violent feelings. To the extent that they express in everyone the consciousness of their national identity, these feelings are fully legitimate and… to stifle them is… a great villainy." That is it: if they are repressed, they will reappear in a denatured form. As for this "'Asemitism' which would be the worst thing, it is in fact a much more favourable ground for a legal solution of the Jewish question than the endless struggle between 'anti-Semitism' and 'philo-Semitism'. There is no non-Russian nationality that needs… all Russians to love it without reservation. Even less that they pretend to love it. In truth, 'Asemitism', combined with a clear and lucid conception of certain moral and political principles and certain political constraints, is much more necessary and useful to our Jewish compatriots than a sentimental and soft 'philo-Semitism'", especially if this one is simulated.—And "it is good that the Jews see the 'national face'" of Russian constitutionalism and democratic society. And "it is of no use to them to speak under the delusion that this face belongs only to anti-Semitic fanaticism." This is not "the head of the Medusa, but the honest and human face of the *Russian nation*, without which the *Russian State* would not stand up."[47]—And again these lines of *Slovo*'s editorial team: "Harmony… implies recognition and respect for all the specificities of each [nationality]."[48]

Heated debates continued in the newspapers. "Within a few days a whole literature was formed on the subject." We assisted "In the Progressive Press… to something unthinkable even a short time ago: there is a debate on the question of Great-Russian nationalism!"[49] But the discussion only reached this level in the *Slovo*; the other papers concentrated on the question of "attractions and repulsions".[50] The intelligentsia turned its anger towards its hero of the day before.

Jabotinsky also gave voice, and even twice… "The bear came out of his lair," he lashed out, addressed to P. Struve, a man who was however so calm and well-balanced. Jabotinsky, on the other hand, felt offended; he described his article, as well as that of Milyukov, as "a famous batch": "their languorous declamation is impregnated with hypocrisy, insincerity, cowardice and opportunism, which is why it is so incorrigibly worthless"; and to ironise in quoting Milyukov: thus "the holy and pure Russian intelligentsia of old" "felt feelings of 'repulsion' at the encounter of the Jews?… Bizarre, no?" He criticised "the 'holy and pure' climate of this marvellous country", and the zoological species of *Yursus judaeophagus intellectualis*." (The conciliatory Winaver also took for his rank: "the Jewish footman of the Russian palace"). Jabotinsky fulminated at the idea that the Jews should wait "until was resolved the central political problem" (i.e. the tsar's deposition): "We thank you for having such a flattering opinion on our disposition to behave like a dog with his master", "on the celerity of faithful Israel". He even concluded by stating that "never before the exploitation of a people by another had ever been revealed with such ingenuous cynicism."[51]

It must be admitted that this excessive virulence hardly contributed to the victory of his cause. Moreover, the near future was going to show that it was precisely the deposition of the tsar which would open the Jews to even more possibilities than they sought to obtain, and cut the grass under the foot of Zionism in Russia; so much and so well that Jabotinsky was also deceived on the merits.

Much later and with the retreat of time, another witness of that era, then a member of the Bund, recalled that "in the years 1907–1914, some liberal intellectuals were affected by the epidemic, if not of open anti-Semitism, at least 'Asemitism' that struck Russia then; on the other hand, having gotten over the extremist tendencies that had arisen during the first Russian revolution, they were tempted to hold the Jews accountable, whose participation in the revolution had been blatant." In the years leading up to the war, "the rise of Russian nationalism was present… in certain circles where, at first sight, the Jewish problem was, only a short time before, perceived as a Russian problem."[52]

In 1912, Jabotinsky himself, this time in a more balanced tone, reported this judicious observation of a prominent Jewish journalist: as soon as the Jews are interested in some cultural activity, immediately the latter becomes foreign to the Russian public, who is no longer attracted to it. A kind of invisible *rejection*. It is true, that a national demarcation cannot be avoided; it will be necessary to organise life in Russia "without external additions which, in so large a quantity, perhaps cannot be tolerated [by the Russians]."[53]

To consider all that has been presented above, the most accurate conclusion is to say that within the Russian

intelligentsia were developing simultaneously (as history offers many examples) two processes that, with regard to the Jewish problem, were distinguished by a question of temperament, not by a degree of sympathy. But the one represented by Struve was too weak, uncertain, and was stifled. Whilst the one who had trumpeted his philo-Semitism in the collection *The Shield* enjoyed a wide publicity and prevailed among public opinion. There is only to regret that Jabotinsky did not recognise Struve's point of view at its fair value.

As for the 1909 debate in the *Slovo* columns, it was not limited to the Jewish question, but turned into a discussion of Russian national consciousness, which, after the eighty years of silence that followed, remains today still vivacious and instructive,—P. Struve wrote: "Just as we must not Russify those who do not want it, so we must not dissolve ourselves in Russian multinationalism."[54]—V. Golubev protested against the "monopolisation of patriotism and nationalism by reactionary groups": "We have lost sight of the fact that the victories won by the Japanese have had a disastrous effect on the popular conscience and national sentiment. Our defeat not only humiliated our bureaucrats," as public opinion hoped, "but, indirectly, the nation as well." (Oh no, not "indirectly": quite directly!) "Russian nationality… has vanished."[55] Nor is it a joke that the flourishing of the word "Russian" itself, which has been transformed into "authentically Russian". The progressive intelligentsia has let these two notions go, abandoning them to the people of the right. "Patriotism, we could only conceive it in quotation marks." But "we must compete with reactionary patriotism with a popular patriotism… We have frozen in our refusal of the patriotism of the Black Hundreds, and if we have opposed something of it, it is not another conception of patriotism, but of universal ideals."[56] And yet, all our cosmopolitanism has not allowed us, until today, to fraternise with the Polish society…[57]

A. Pogodin was able to say that after V. Solovyov's violent indictment of Danilevsky's book, *Russia and Europe*, after Gradovsky's articles, were "the first manifestations of this consciousness which, like the instinct of self-preservation, awakens among the peoples when danger threatens them." (Coincidentally—at the very moment when this polemic took place, Russia had to endure its national humiliation: it was forced to recognise with pitiable resignation the annexation by Austria of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was equivalent to a "diplomatic Tsou-Shina".) "Fatality leads us to raise this question, which was formerly entirely foreign to the Russian intelligentsia, but which life itself imposes on us with a brutality that forbids all evasion."[58]

In conclusion, the *Slovo* wrote: "A fortuitous incident triggered quite a journalistic storm." This means that "Russian society needs national awareness". In the past, "it had turned away not only from a false anti-national policy… but also from genuine nationalism without which a policy cannot really be built." A people capable of creation "cannot but have its own face."[59] "Minine[*] was certainly a nationalist." A constructive nationalist, possessing the sense of the State, is peculiar to *living* nations, and that is what we need now.[60] "Just as three hundred years ago, history tells us to reply," to say, "in the dark hours of trial… if we have the right, like any people worthy of the name, to exist by ourselves."[61]

And yet—even if, apparently, the year 1909 was rather peaceful—one felt that the Storm was in the air!

However, certain things were not lost sight of (M. Slavinski): "Attempts to Russify or, more exactly, to impose the Russian-Russian model on Russia… have had a disastrous effect on living national peculiarities, not only of all the non-sovereign peoples of the Empire, but also and above all of the people of Great-Russia… The cultural forces of the people of Great Russia proved insufficient for this." "For the nationality of Great Russia, only the development of the interior, a normal circulation of blood, is good."[62] (Alas! even today, the lesson has not been assimilated). "Necessary is the struggle against physiological nationalism, [when] a stronger people tries to impose on others who are less so a way of life that is foreign to them."[63] But an empire as this could not have been constituted solely by physical force, there was also a "moral force". And if we possess this force, then the equality of rights of other peoples (Jews as well as Poles) does not threaten us in any way.[64]

In the nineteenth century already, and *a fortiori* at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Russian intelligentsia felt that it was at a high level of global consciousness, universality, cosmopolitanism or internationality (at the time, little difference was made between all these notions). In many fields, it had almost entirely denied what was Russian, national. (From the top of the tribune of the Duma, one practised at the pun: "patriot-Iscariot.")

As for the Jewish intelligentsia, it did not deny its national identity. Even the most extreme of Jewish socialists struggled to reconcile their ideology with national sentiment. At the same time, there was no voice among the Jews—from Dubnov to Jabotinsky, passing by Winaver—to say that the Russian intelligentsia, who supported their persecuted brothers with all their souls, might not give up *his own* national feeling. Equity would have required it. But no one perceived this disparity: under the notion of *equality of rights*, the Jews understood *something more*.

Thus, the Russian intelligentsia, solitary, took the road to the future.

The Jews did not obtain equal rights under the tsars, but—and probably partly for this very reason—they obtained the hand and the fidelity of the Russian intelligentsia. The power of their development, their energy, their talent *penetrated* the consciousness of Russian society. The idea we had of our perspectives, of our interests, the impetus we gave to the search for solutions to our problems, all this, we incorporated it to the idea that they were getting of it themselves. We have adopted their vision of our history and how to get out of it.

Understanding this is much more important than calculating the percentage of Jews who tried to destabilise Russia (all of whom we did), who made the revolution or participated in Bolshevik power.

Footnotes

1. *B. T. Dinour*, Religiozno-natsionalny oblik ruskovo ievreistava (The religious and national aspects of the Jews of Russia), in BJWR-1, pp. 319, 322.
2. *F. M. Dostoyevsky*, Dnevnik pisatelia za 1877, 1880 i 1581 gody (Journal of a writer, March 1877, chapter 2), M., L., 1929, 1877, Mart, gl 2, p. 78.
3. *I. L. Teitel*, Iz moiii jizni za 40 let (Memories of 40 years of my life), Paris, I. Povolotski i ko., 1925, pp. 227–228.
4. JE, t. 11, p. 894.
5. *V. S. Mandel*, Konservativnye i pazrouchitelnye elementy v ievreïstve (Conservative and destructive elements among Jews), in RaJ, pp. 201, 203.
6. *D. O. Linsky*, O natsionalnom samosoznanii ruskovo ievreia (The national consciousness of the Russian Jew), RaJ, p. 142.
7. *G. A. Landau*, Revolioutsionnye idei v ievreïskoi obctchestvennosti (Revolutionary Ideas in Jewish Society), RaJ, p. 115.
8. Stenographic Record of the Debates of the Second Duma, 13 March 1907, p. 522.

- Literally “good”, “generous”.
    - Formed from “babushka”—“grandmother”, “granny”.
        - Literally “clear”, “bright”.

9. *P. G.*—Marodiory knigi 3 (The Marauders of the Book), in Retch, 1917, 6 May, s.
10. *Vl. Jabotinsky*, [Sb] Felietony. SPb.: Tipografia Gerold, 1913, pp. 9–11.
11. *Vl. Jabotinsky*, [Sb] Felietony, pp. 16, 62–63, 176–180, 253–254.

- Azef Evno (1569–1918), terrorist, double agent (of the S.-R. and the Okhrana), unmasked by A. Bourtsev.
    - The assassin of Stolypin; *Cf. supra*, chapter 10.

12. *Ibidem*, pp. 26, 30, 75, 172–173, 195, 199–200, 205.
13. *Ibidem*, pp. 15, 17, 69.
14. *Ibidem*, pp. 18–24, 175–177.
15. *Ibidem*, pp. 14, 200.
16. Pamiati, M. L. Vichnitsera, BJWR-1. p. 8.
17. JE, t. 8, p. 466.
18. JE, t. 7, pp. 449–450.
19. JE, t. 16, p. 276.
20. *I. M. Bikerman*, Rossia i rousskoye ievreisstvo (Russia and the Jewish Community of Russia), RaJ. p. 86.
21. *St. Ivanovich*, Ievrei i sovetskaya dikiatoura (The Jews and the Soviet Dictatorship), in JW, pp. 55–56.
22. JE, t. 12, pp. 372–373.
23. *Sliosberg*, t. 1, pp. 3–4.
24. *Sliosberg*, t. 2, p. 302.
25. *Sliosberg*, t. 1, p. 302.

26. *Linsky*, RaJ, p. 144.

- *Vekhi*: resounding collection of articles (1909) in which a group of intellectuals disillusioned from Marxism invited the intelligentsia to reconcile with the power.

27. *V. A. Maklakov*, Vlast i obchtchestvennost na zakate staroï Rossii (Vospominania sovremennika) [The power and opinion during the twilight of ancient Russia (Memoirs of a Contemporary)], Paris: Prilojenie k "Illioustrirovannoï Rossii" II n 1936, p. 466.
28. Der Letzte russische Alleinherscher (The Last Autocrat: Study on the Life and Reign of the Emperor of Russia Nicholas II), Berlin, Ebcrhard Frowein Verlag [1913], p. 58.
29. JE, t. 12, p. 621.
30. JE, t. 12, p. 621.
31. *Nikolai Berdyaev*, Filosofia neravenstva (Philosophy of Inequality), 2nd ed., Paris, YMCA Press, 1970, p. 72.
32. *Sliosberg*, t. 1, p. 260.
33. Shchit (the Shield), 1916.

- Menshikov Michel (1859–1918), began a career as a sailor (until 1892), then became a journalist at the *New Times*, supported Stolypin. After October, takes refuge in Valdai. Arrested in August 1918 by the Bolsheviks, he was executed without trial.

34. *Kn. S. P. Mansyrev*, Moi vospominania (My memories) // [Sb.] Fevralskaïa revolioutsia / sost. S. A. Alexeyev. M. L., 1926, p. 259.
35. *A. Voronel*, in "22": Obchtchestvenno-polititcheski i literatourny newspaper Ivreiskoi intelligentsii iz SSSR v Izrailie, Tel Aviv, 1986, no. 50, pp. 156–157.
36. Perepiska V. V. Rozanova and M. O. Gerchenzona (Correspondence of V. Rozanov and M. Gerchenzon), Novy Mir, 1991, no. 3, p. 239.
37. *V. V. Choulguine*, "Chto nam v nikh ne nravitsa…": Ob antisemitzme v Rossii ("What we do not like about them…" On anti-Semitism in Russia), Paris, 1929, pp. 58, 75.
38. Shchit (the Shield), p. 164.
39. *Ibidem*, p. 145.
40. *Vl. Jabotinsky*, Asemitizm (Asemitism), in Slovo, SPb., 1909, 9 (22) March, p. 2; See also: [Sb.] Felietony, pp. 77–83.
41. Slovo, 1909, 9 (22) March, p. 1.

- of 1905.

42. *V. Golubev*, Soglachenie, a ne stianie, Slovo, 1909, 9 (22) March, p. 1.
43. *P. Struve*, Intelligentsia i natsionalnoïe litso, Slovo, 1909, 10 (23) March, p. 2.
44. *P. Milyukov*, Natsionalizm protiv natsionalizma (Nationalism Against Nationalism), Retch, 1909, 11 (24) March, p. 2.
45. *P. Struve*, Polemitcheskie zigzagui i nesvoïevremennaya pravda (polemical zigzags and undesired truth), Slovo, 1909, 12 (25) March, p. 1.
46. Slovo, 1909, 17 (30) March, p. 1.
47. *P. Struve*, Slovo, 1909, 12 (25) March, p. 1.
48. *V. Golubev*, K polemike o natsionalizme (On the controversy regarding nationalism), *ibidem*, p. 2.
49. *M. Slavinski*, Ruskie, velikorossy i rossiane (The Russians, the Great Russians, and the citizens of Russia), *ibidem*, 14 (27) March, p. 2.
50. Slovo*, 1909, 17 (30) March, p. 1.
51. *Vl. Jabotinsky*, Medved iz berlogui—Sb. Felietony, pp. 87–90.
52. *G. I. Aronson*, V borbe za grajdanskie i natsionalnye prava Obchtchestvennye tetchenia v rousskom ievreïstve (The fight for civil and national rights currents of opinion in the Jewish community of Russia), BJWR-1, pp. 229, 572.
53. *Vl. Jabotinsky*—[Sb.] Felietony, pp. 245–247.
54. *P. Struve*, Slovo, 1909, 10 (23) March, p. 2.
55. *V. Golubev*, *ibidem*, 12 (25) March, p. 2.
56. *V. Golubev*, O monopolii na patriotizm (On the monopoly of patriotism), *ibidem*, 14 (27) March, p. 2.
57. *V. Golubev*, Ot samuvajenia k ouvajeniou (From self-respect to respect), *ibidem*, 25 March (7 April), p. 1.
58. *A. Pogodin*, K voprosou o natsionalizme (On the national question), *ibidem*, 15 (28) March, p. 1.
59. Slovo, 1909, 17 (30) March, p. 1.

- Hero of the Russian resistance to the Polish invasion in the early seventeenth century.

60. *A. Pogodin*, *ibidem*, 15 (28) March, p. 1.
61. Slovo, 1909, 17 (30) March, p. 1.
62. *M. Slavinski*, Slovo, 1909, 14 (27) March, p. 2.
63. *A. Pogodin*, *ibidem*, 15 (28) March, p. 1.

64. Slovo, 1909, 17 (30) March, p. 1.

Chapter 12

During the War (1914–1916)

The First World War was undoubtedly the greatest of the follies of the twentieth century. With no real motives or purposes, three major European powers—Germany, Russia, Austria-Hungary—clashed in a deadly battle which resulted in the first two not recovering for the duration of the century, and the third disintegrating. As for the two allies of Russia, seemingly victors, they held out for another quarter of a century, and then lost their power of domination forever. Henceforth, the whole of Europe ceased to fulfil its proud mission of guiding humanity, becoming an object of jealousy and incapable of keeping in its weakened hands its colonial possessions.

None of the three emperors, and even less Nicholas II and his entourage, had realised in *what* war they were plunging, they could imagine neither its scale nor its violence. Apart from Stolypin and after him, Durnovo, the authorities had not understood the warning addressed to Russia between 1904 and 1906.

Let us consider this same war with the eyes of the Jews. In these three neighbouring empires lived three-quarters of the Jews of the planet (and 90% of the Jews of Europe[1]) who were on top of that living in the area of future military operations, of the province of Kovno (then Livonia) up to Austrian Galicia (then Romania). And the war placed them before an interrogation as pressing as it was painful: could all, living on the front steps of these three empires, preserve their imperial patriotism under these conditions? For if, for the armies that were advancing, behind the front was the enemy, for the Jews established in these regions, behind the front lived neighbours and co-religionists. They could not want this war: could their mindset shift brutally towards patriotism? As for the ordinary Jews, those of the Pale of Settlement, they had even less reason to support the Russian army. We have seen that a century before, the Jews of western Russia had helped the Russians against Napoleon. But, in 1914, it was quite different: *in the name of what* would they help the Russian army? On behalf of the Pale of Settlement? On the contrary, did the war not give rise to the hope of a liberation? With the arrival of the Austrians and the Germans, a new Pale of Settlement was not going to be established, the *numerus clausus* would not be maintained in the educational establishments!

It is precisely in the western part of the Pale of Settlement that the Bund retained influence, and Lenin tells us that its members “are in their majority Germanophiles and rejoice at the defeat of Russia.”[2] We also learn that during the war, the Jewish autonomist movement *Vorwarts* adopted an openly pro-German position. Nowadays, a Jewish writer notes finely that, “if one reflects on the meaning of the formula ‘God, the Tsar, the Fatherland…’, it is impossible to imagine a Jew, a loyal subject of the Empire, who could have taken this formula seriously,” in other words, in the first degree.[3]

But, in the capitals, things were different. Despite their positions of 1904–1905, the influential Jewish circles, like the Russian liberals, offered their support to the autocratic regime when the conflict broke out; they proposed a pact. “The patriotic fervour which swept Russia did not leave the Jews aside.”[4] “It was the time when, seeing the Russian patriotism of the Jews, Purishkevich[*] embraced the rabbis.”[5] As for the press (not *Novoie Vremia*, but the liberal press, “half-Jewish” according to Witte, the same one who expressed and oriented the jolts of public opinion and who, in 1905, literally *demanded* the capitulation of power), it was, from the first days of the war, moved by patriotic enthusiasm. “Over the head of little Serbia, the sword is raised against Great Russia, the guarantor of the inalienable right of millions of people to work and to life!” At an extraordinary meeting of the Duma, “the representatives of the different nationalities and different parties were all, on this historic day, inhabited by the same thought, a single emotion made all the voices tremble… That no one lay a hand on Saint Russia!… We are ready for all sacrifices to defend the honour and dignity of Russia, one and indivisible… ‘God, the Tsar, the people’—and victory is assured… We, Jews, defend our country because we are deeply attached to it.”

Even if, behind this, there was a well-founded calculation, the expectation of a gesture of recognition in return—the attainment of equal rights, even if it was only once the war was over—, the government had to, by accepting this unexpected ally, decide to assume—or promise to assume—its share of obligations.

And, in fact, did the achievement of equal rights necessarily have to come through the revolution? Moreover, the crushing of the insurrection by Stolypin "had led to a decline in interest in politics in Russian as well as Jewish circles,"[6]—which, at the very least, meant that there was a move away from the revolution. As Chulguine[*] declared: "Combating the Jews and the Germans simultaneously was above the forces of power in Russia, it was necessary to conclude a pact with somebody."[7] This new alliance with the Jews had to be formalised: it was necessary to produce at least a document containing promises, as had been done for the Poles. But only Stolypin would have had the intelligence and the courage to do so. Without him, there was no one to understand the situation and take the appropriate decisions. (And, from the spring of 1915, even more serious mistakes were made.)

The liberal circles, including the elite of the Jewish community, also had in view another consideration that they took for a certainty. From the year 1907 (again, without urgent necessity), Nicholas II had allowed himself to be dragged into a military alliance with England (thus putting around his neck the rope of the subsequent confrontation with Germany). And, now, all the progressive circles in Russia were making the following analysis: the alliance with the democratic powers and the common victory with them would inevitably lead to a global democratisation of Russia at the end of the war and, consequently, the definitive establishment of equal rights for the Jews. There was, therefore, a sense for the Jews of Russia, and not only for those who lived in Petersburg and Moscow, to aspire to the victory of Russia in this war.

But these considerations were counterbalanced by the precipitated, massive *expulsion* of the Jews from the area of the front, ordered by the General Staff at the time of the great retreat of 1915. That the latter had the power to do so was the result of ill-considered decisions taken at the beginning of the war. In July 1914, in the heat of the action, in the agitation which reigned in the face of the imminence of conflict, the Emperor had signed without reflection, as a document of secondary importance, the provisional Regulation of the field service which gave the General Staff unlimited power over all the neighbouring regions of the front, with a very wide territorial extension, and this, without any consultation with the Council of Ministers. At the time, no one had attached any importance to this document, because all were convinced that the Supreme Command would always be assured by the Emperor and that there could be no conflict with the Cabinet. But, as early as July 1914, the Emperor was persuaded not to assume the Supreme Command of the armies. As a wise man, the latter proposed the post to his favourite, the fine speaker Sukhomlinov, then Minister of Defence, who naturally declined this honour. It was the great prince Nicholas Nicolaevich who was appointed, and the latter did not consider it possible to begin by upsetting the composition of the General Staff, at the head of which was General Yanushkevich. But, at the same time, the provisional regulations were not altered, so that the administration of a third of Russia was in the hands of Yanushkevich, an insignificant man who was not even a military officer by profession.

From the very beginning of the war, orders were given locally for the expulsion of the Jews from the army areas.[8] In August 1914, the newspapers read: "The rights of the Jews… Telegraphic instruction to all the governors of provinces and cities to stop the acts of mass or individual expulsion of Jews." But, from the beginning of 1915, as testified the doctor D. Pasmanik, a medic on the front during the war, "suddenly, throughout the area of the front and in all circles close to power, spread the rumour that the Jews were doing espionage."[9]

During the summer of 1915, Yanukhovich—precisely him—tried to mask the retreat of the Russian armies, which at that time seemed appalling, by ordering the *mass* deportation of the Jews from the front area, arbitrary deportation, without any examination of individual cases. It was so easy: to blame all the defeats on the Jews!

These accusations may not have come about without the help of the German General Staff, which issued a proclamation calling on the Jews of Russia to rise up against their government. But opinion, supported by many sources, prevails that in this case it was Polish influence that was at work. As Sliosberg wrote, just before the war, there had been a brutal explosion of anti-Semitism, "a campaign against Jewish domination in industry and commerce… When war broke out, it was at its zenith… and the Poles endeavoured by all means to tarnish the image of the Jewish populations in the eyes of the Supreme Command by spreading all sorts of nonsense and legends about Jewish espionage."[10]— Immediately after the promises made by Nikolai Nikolaevich in the Appeal to the Poles of 14 August, the latter founded in Warsaw the "Central Committee of the Bourgeoisie", which did not include a single Jew, whereas in Poland the Jews

represented 14% of the population. In September, there was a pogrom against the Jews in Souvalki.[11]—Then, during the retreat of 1915, "the agitation which reigned in the midst of the army facilitated the spread of the calumnies made up by the Poles."[12] Pasmanik asserts that he is "in a position to prove that the first rumours about the treason of the Jews were propagated by the Poles", a part of which "was actively assisting the Germans. Seeking to avert suspicion, they hastened to spread the rumour that the Jews were engaged in espionage."[13] In connection with this expulsion of the Jews, several sources emphasised the fact that Yanukhevich himself was a "Pole converted to Orthodoxy".[14]

He may have undergone this influence, but we consider these explanations insufficient and in no way justifying the attitude of the Russian General Staff.

Of course, the Jews in the front area could not break their ties with the neighbouring villages, interrupt the "Jewish post", and turn into the enemies of their co-religionists. Moreover, in the eyes of the Jews in the Pale of Settlement, the Germans appeared as a European nation of high culture, much different from the Russians and the Poles (the black shadow of Auschwitz had not yet covered the earth or crossed the Jewish conscience…). At that time, the *Times* correspondent, Steven Graham, reported that as soon as the smoke of a German ship appeared on the horizon, the Jewish population of Libava "forgot the Russian language" and began to speak German. If they had to leave, the Jews preferred to go to the German side.—The hostility displayed by the Russian army, and then their deportation, could only provoke their bitterness and cause some of them to collaborate openly with the Germans.

In addition to the accusations against the Jews living in these areas, the Jews were accused of cowardice and desertion. Father Georges Chavelsky, chaplain of the Russian Army, was attached to the Staff, but often went to the front and was well informed of all that was going on there; he wrote in his memoirs: "From the first days of the war, it was repeated with insistence that the Jewish soldiers were cowards and deserters, and local Jews spies and traitors. There were many examples of Jews who had gone to the enemy or fled; or Jewish civilians who had given information to the enemy, or, in the course of their offensives, had delivered to them Russian soldiers and officers who had lingered on the spot, etc., etc. The more time passed, the more our situation deteriorated, the more the hatred and the exasperation against the Jews increased. rumours were spreading from the front to the rear… they created a climate that was becoming dangerous for all Jews in Russia."[15]—Second Lieutenant M. Lemke, a Socialist who was then in Staff, recorded, in the newspaper he was secretly keeping, reports from the southwest Front, in December 1915; he noted in particular: "There is a disturbing increase in the number of Jewish and Polish defectors, not only in the advanced positions but also in the rear of the front."[16]—In November 1915, one even heard during a meeting of the Progressive Bloc bureau the following remarks, noted by Milyukov: "Which people gave proof of its absence of patriotism?—The Jews."[17]

In Germany and Austria-Hungary, the Jews could occupy high-level positions in the administration without having to abjure their religion, and this was also true in the army. While in Russia, a Jew could not become an officer if he did not convert to orthodoxy, and Jews with higher levels of education were most often completing their military service as simple soldiers. One can understand that they did not rush in to serve in such an army. (In spite of this, Jews were decorated with the cross of Saint-George.) Captain G. S. Doumbadze recalled a Jew, a law student, who received this decoration four times, but refused to enter the School of Officers in order not to have to convert, which would have caused his father to die of grief. Later he was executed by the Bolsheviks.[18])

For all that, it would be unreliable and implausible to conclude that all these accusations were mere fabrications. Chavelsky writes: "The question is too vast and complex… but I cannot help saying that at that time there was no lack of motives for accusing the Jews… In times of peace, it was tolerated that they be assigned to civilian tasks; during the war… the Jews filled the combat units… During the offensives, they were often in the rear; when the army retreated, they were at the front. More than once they spread panic in their units… It cannot be denied that the cases of espionage, of going over to the enemy were not rare… We couldn't avoid finding suspicious that the Jews were also perfectly informed of what was happening on the front. The 'Jewish telephone' sometimes worked better and faster than all the countryside's telephones… It was not uncommon for the news of the front to be known in the small hamlet of Baranovichi, situated near the General Staff, even before they reach the Supreme Commander and his Chief of Staff."[19] (Lemke points out the Jewish origins of Chavelsky himself.[20])

A rabbi from Moscow went to the Staff to try to persuade Chavelsky that “the Jews are like the others: there are some courageous, there are some cowards; there are those who are loyal to their country, there are also the bastards, the traitors,” and he cited examples taken from other wars. “Although it was very painful for me, I had to tell him everything I knew about the conduct of Jews during this war,” “but we were not able to reach an agreement.”[21]

Here is yet the testimony of a contemporary. Abraham Zisman, an engineer, then assigned to the Evacuation Commission, recalled half a century later: “To my great shame, I must say that [the Jews who were near the front] behaved very despicably, giving the German army all the help they could.”[22]

There were also charges of a strictly economic nature against the Jews who supplied the Russian army. Lemke thus copied the order to the General Staff signed by the Emperor on the very day of his taking office as Supreme Commander (this order had therefore been prepared by Yanushkevich): Jewish suppliers abused the orders for bandages, horses, bread given to them by the army; they receive from the military authorities documents certifying “that they have been entrusted with the task of making purchases for the needs of the army… but without any indication of quantity or place.” Then “the Jews have certified copies of these documents made and distributed to their accomplices”, thus acquiring the possibility of making purchases all over the Empire. “Thanks to the solidarity between them and their considerable financial resources, they control vast areas where are bought mainly horses and bread,” which artificially raises prices and makes more difficult the work of the officials responsible of supplies.[23]

But all these facts cannot justify the conduct of Yanushkevich and the General Staff. Without making an effort to separate the good wheat from the chaff, the Russian High Command launched an operation, as massive as it was inept, for the expulsion of the Jews.

Particularly striking was the attitude towards the Jews of Galicia who lived in Austro-Hungarian territory. “From the beginning of the First World War, tens of thousands of Jews fled from Galicia to Hungary, Bohemia, and Vienna. Those who remained suffered greatly during the period of the Russian occupation of this region.”[24] “Bullying, beatings, and even pogroms, frequently organised by the Cossack units, became the daily lot of the Jews of Galicia.”[25] This is what Father Chavelsky writes: “In Galicia, hatred towards the Jews was still fuelled by the vexations inflicted under the Austrian domination of the Russian populations [in fact, Ukrainian and Ruthenian] by the powerful Jews”[26] (in other words, these same populations were now participating in Cossack arbitrariness).

“In the province of Kovno all the Jews were deported without exception: the sick, the wounded soldiers, the families of the soldiers who were at the front.”[27] “Hostages were required under the pretext of preventing acts of espionage,” and facts of this kind “became commonplace.”[28]

This deportation of the Jews appears in a stronger light than in 1915—contrary to what would happen in 1941—there was no mass evacuation of urban populations. The army was withdrawing, the civilian population remained there, nobody was driven out—but the Jews and they alone were driven out, all without exception and in the shortest possible time: not to mention the moral wound that this represented for each one, this brought about the ruin, the loss of one’s house, one’s property. Was it not, in another form, always the same pogrom of great magnitude, but this time provoked by the authorities and not by the populace? How can we not understand the Jewish misfortune?

To this we must add that Yanushkevich, like the high-ranking officers who were under his command, acted without any logical reflection, in disorder, precipitation, incoherence, which could only add to the confusion. There exists no chronicle nor account of all these military decisions. Only echoes scattered in the press of the time, and also in “The Archives of the Russian Revolution” by I. V. Hessen, a series of documents[29] collected at random, without follow-up; and then, as with Lemke, copies of documents made by individuals. This scattered data nevertheless allow us to form an opinion on what happened.

Some of the provisions foresee expelling Jews from the area of military operations “in the direction of the enemy” (which would mean: in the direction of the Austrians, across the front line?), to send back to Galicia the Jews originating from there; other directives foresee deporting them to the rear of the front, sometimes at a short distance,

sometimes on the left bank of the Dnieper, sometimes even “beyond the Volga”. Sometimes it is “cleansing the Jews of a zone of five versts from the front”, sometimes we speak of a zone of fifty versts. The evacuation timeframes are sometimes five days, with authorisation to take away one’s property, sometimes twenty-four hours, probably without this authorisation; as for the resisters, they will be taken under escort. Or even: no evacuation, but in the event of a retreat, take hostages among the significant Jews, especially the rabbis, in case Jews denounce either Russians or Poles who are well disposed in regard to Russia; in the event of execution of these by the Germans, carry out the execution of the hostages (but how can we know, verify that there were executions in German-occupied territory? It was truly an incredible system!). Other instruction: we do not take hostages, we just designate them among the Jewish population inhabiting our territories—they will bear responsibility for espionage in favour of the enemy committed by other Jews. Or even: avoid at all costs that the Jews be aware of the location of the trenches dug in the rear of the front (so that they cannot communicate it to the Austrians through their co-religionists,—it was known that Romanian Jews could easily cross the border); or even, on the contrary: oblige precisely civilian Jews to dig the trenches. Or even (order given by the commander of the military region of Kazan, General Sandetski, known for his despotic behaviour): assemble all the Jewish soldiers in marching battalions and send them to the front. Or, conversely: discontent provoked by the presence of Jews in the combat units; their military ineptitude.

There is a feeling that in their campaign against the Jews, Yanushkevich and the General Staff were losing their minds: what exactly did they want? During these particularly difficult weeks of fighting, when the Russian troops retreated, exhausted and short of ammunition, a flyer containing a “list of questions” was sent to the heads of units and instructed them to assemble information on “the moral, military, physical qualities of Jewish soldiers”, as well as their relations with local Jewish populations. And the possibility was considered of completely excluding Jews from the army after the war.

We also do not know the exact number of displaced persons. In *The Book of the Jewish Russian World*, we read that in April 1915, 40,000 Jews were expulsed from the province of Courland, and in May 120,000 of them were expelled from Kovno.[30] In another place, the same book gives an overall figure for the whole period, amounting to 250,000[31] *including* Jewish refugees, which means that the deportees would hardly have accounted for more than half of this digit. After the revolution, the newspaper *Novoie Vremia* published information according to which the evacuation of all the inhabitants of Galicia dispersed on the territory of Russia 25,000 persons, including nearly a thousand Jews.[32] (These are numbers that, for the moment, are too weak to be probable.)

On 10–11 May 1915, the order was issued to put an end to the deportations, and these ceased. Jabotinsky drew the conclusion of the expulsion of the Jews from the zone of the front in 1915 by speaking of a “catastrophe probably unprecedented since the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella” in Spain in the fifteenth century.[33] But is there not also something of a move of History in the fact that this massive deportation—itself, and the indignant reactions it provoked—would make a concrete contribution to the much desired suppression of the Pale of Settlement?

Leonid Andreyev had rightly observed: “This famous ‘barbarity’ of which we are accused of… rests entirely and exclusively on our Jewish question and its bloody outbursts.”[34]

These deportations of Jews were resonant on a planetary scale. From Petersburg, during the war, Jews defending human rights transmitted information about the situation of their co-religionists to Europe; “Among them, Alexander Isayevich Braudo distinguished himself by his tireless activity.”[35] A. G. Shlyapnikov relates that Gorky had sent him documents on the persecution of Jews in Russia; he brought them to the United States. All this information spread widely and rapidly in Europe and America, raising a powerful wave of indignation.

And if the best among the representatives of the Jewish community and the Jewish intelligentsia feared that “the victory of Germany… would only reinforce anti-Semitism… and, for that reason alone, there could be no question of sympathies towards the Germans or hopes for their victory,”[36] a Russian military intelligence officer in Denmark reported in December 1915 that the success of anti-Russian propaganda “is also facilitated by Jews who openly declare that they do not wish the victory of Russia and its consequence: the autonomy promised to Poland, for they know that the latter would take energetic measures with a view to the expulsion of Jews from within its borders”[37]; In other words, it was Polish anti-Semitism that was to be feared, not German anti-Semitism: the fate which awaited the Jews in a

Poland which had become independent would perhaps be even worse than that which they underwent in Russia.

The British and French Governments were somewhat embarrassed to openly condemn the attitude of their ally. But at that time, the United States was increasingly engaged in the international arena. And in the still neutral America of 1915, "sympathies were divided…; some of the Jews who came from Germany were sympathetic to the latter, even though they did not manifest it in an active manner."[38] Their dispositions were maintained by the Jews from Russia and Galicia, who, as the Socialist Ziv testified, wished for (it could no longer be otherwise) the defeat of Russia, and even more so by the "professional revolutionists" Russian-Jews who had settled in the United States.[39] To this was added the anti-Russian tendencies in the American public: very recently, in 1911, the dramatic break-up of an eighty-year-old US-Russian economic agreement took place. The Americans regarded the official Russia as a country that was "corrupt, reactionary, and ignorant".[40]

This quickly translated into tangible effects. As early as August 1915, we read in the reports that Milyukov was holding meetings of the Progressive Bloc: "The Americans pose as a condition [of aid to Russia] the possibility for American Jews to have free access to Russian territory,"[41]—always the same source of conflict as in 1911 with T. Roosevelt.—And when a Russian parliamentary delegation went to London and Paris in early 1916 to apply for financial aid, it was faced to a categorical refusal. The episode is told in detail by Shingaryov[*], in the report he presented on 20 June 1916 to the Military and Maritime Commission of the Duma after the return of the delegation. In England, Lord Rothschild replied to this request: "You are affecting our credit in the United States." In France, Baron Rothschild declared: "In America, the Jews are very numerous and active, they exert a great influence, in such a manner that the American public is very hostile to you." (Then "Rothschild expressed himself even more brutally", and Shingaryov demanded that his words not be included in the record.) This financial pressure from the Americans, the rapporteur concludes, is a continuation of a policy that has led them to break our trade agreement in 1911 (but, of course, to that was added the massive deportations of Jews undertaken in the meantime). Jakob Schiff, who had spoken so harshly of Russia in 1905, now declared to a French parliamentarian sent to America: "We will give credit to England and France when we have the assurance that Russia will do something for the Jews; the money you borrow from us goes to Russia, and we do not want that."[42]—Milyukov evoked the protests at the Duma tribune of "millions and millions of American Jews… who have met a very wide echo in American opinion. I have in my hands many American newspapers that prove it… Meetings ending with scenes of hysteria, crying jags at the evocation of the situation of the Jews in Russia. I have a copy of the provision made by President Wilson, establishing a 'Jewish Day' throughout the United States to collect aid for the victims." And "when we ask for money to American bankers, they reply: Pardon, how is that? We agree to lend money to England and France, but on condition that Russia does not see the colour of it… The famous banker Jakob Schiff, who rules the financial world in New York, categorically refuses any idea of a loan to Russia…"[43]

The *Encyclopædia Judaica*, written in English, confirms that Schiff, "using his influence to prevent other financial institutions lending to Russia…, pursued this policy throughout the First World War"[44] and put pressure on other banks to do the same.

For all these upheavals provoked by the deportations, both in Russia and abroad, it was the Council of Ministers who had to pay for the broken pots even though the Staff did not consult it and gave no attention to its protests. I have already quoted a few snippets of the passionate debates that were agitating the Cabinet on this subject.[45] Here are a few others. Krivoshein[**] was in favour of temporarily granting the Jews the right to settle in all the cities of Russia: "This favour granted to the Jews will be useful not only from a political point of view, but also from an economic point of view… Up to now, our policy in this field made one think of this sleeping miser on his gold, which does not benefit from it and does not allow others to do so." But Roukhlov replied: this proposal "constitutes a fundamental and irreversible modification of legislation which has been introduced throughout History with the aim of protecting the Russian heritage from the control of the Jews, and the Russian people of the deleterious influence of the neighbouring of the Jews… You specify that this favour will be granted only for the duration of the war…, but we must not be in denial": after the war, "not one government will be found" to "send the Jews back to the Pale of Settlement… The Russians are dying in the trenches and meanwhile the Jews will settle in the heart of Russia, benefit from the misfortunes endured by the people, of general ruin. What will be the reaction of the army and the Russian people?"—

And again, during the following meeting: “The Russian population endures unimaginable hardships and suffering, both on the front and in the interior of the country, while Jewish bankers buy from their co-religionists the right to use Russia’s misfortune to exploit tomorrow this exsanguinated people.”[46]

But the ministers acknowledged that there was no other way out. This measure was to be “applied with exceptional speed”—“in order to meet the financial needs of the war.”[47] All of them, with the exception of Roukhlov, signed their name at the bottom of the bulletin authorising the Jews to settle freely (with the possibility of acquiring real estate) throughout the Empire, with the exception of the capitals, agricultural areas, provinces inhabited by the Cossacks and the Yalta region.[48] In the autumn of 1915 was also repealed the system of the annual passport, which had hitherto been compulsory for the Jews who were now entitled to a permanent passport. (These measures were followed by a partial lifting of the *numerus clausus* in educational establishments and the authorisation to occupy the functions of litigator within the limits of the representation quotas.[49]) The opposition that these decisions met in the public opinion was broken under the pressure of the war.

Thus, after a century and a quarter of existence, the Pale of Settlement of the Jews disappeared forever. And to add insult to injury, as Sliosberg notes, “this measure, so important in its content…, amounting to the abolition of the Pale of Settlement, this measure for which had fought in vain for decades the Russian Jews and the liberal circles of Russia, went unnoticed!”[50] Unnoticed because of the magnitude assumed by the war. Streams of refugees and immigrants were then overwhelming Russia.

The Refugee Committee, set up by the government, also provided displaced Jews with funds to help settlements.[51] Until the February revolution, “the Conference on Refugees continued its work and allocated considerable sums to the various national committees,” including the Jewish Committee.[52] It goes without saying that were added to this the funds contributed by many Jewish organisations that had embarked on this task with energy and efficiency. Among them was the Union of Jewish Craftsmen (UJC), created in 1880, well-established and already extending its action beyond the Pale of Settlement. The UJC had developed a cooperation with the World Relief Committee and the “Joint” (“Committee for the distribution of funds for aid to war-affected Jews”). All of them provided massive aid to the Jewish populations of Russia; “The ‘Joint’ had rescued hundreds of thousands of Jews in Russia and Austria-Hungary.”[53] In Poland, the UJC helped Jewish candidates for emigration or settled as farmers—because “during the war, Jews who lived in small villages had been driven, not without coercion by the German occupier, to the work of the land.”[54] There was also the Jewish Prophylactic Society (JPS), founded in 1912; it had given itself for mission not only to direct medical aid to the Jews, but also the creation of sanatoriums, dispensaries, the development of sanitary hygiene in general, the prevention of diseases, “the struggle against the physical deterioration of Jewish populations” (Nowhere in Russia there existed yet organisations of this kind). Now, in 1915, these detachments were organising for Jewish emigrants, all along their route and at their place of destination, supply centres, flying medical teams, countryside hospitals, shelters and pædiatric consultations.[55]—Also in 1915, appeared the Jewish Association for the Assistance of War Victims (JAAWV); benefiting of support from the Committee for Refugees and the so generously endowed by the State “Zemgor” (association of the “Union of Zemstvos” and the “Union of Cities”), as well as credit from America, the JAAWV set up a vast network of missionaries to help the Jews during their journey and their new place of residence, with rolling kitchens, canteens, clothing distribution points, (employment agencies, vocational training centres), childcare establishments, schools. What an admirable organisation!—let us remember that approximately 250,000 refugees and displaced persons were taken care of; according to official figures, the number of these was already reaching 215,000 in August 1916.[56]—and there was also the “Political Bureau” near the Jewish Deputies of the fourth Duma, which resulted from an agreement between the Jewish Popular Group, the Jewish People’s Party, the Jewish Democratic Group and the Zionists; during the war, it deployed “considerable activity”.[57]

In spite of all the difficulties, “the war gave a strong impulse to the spirit of initiative of the Jews, whipped their will to take charge.”[58] During these years “the considerable forces hidden hitherto in the depths of the Jewish consciousness matured and revealed to the open… immense reserves of initiative in the most varied fields of political and social action.”[59]—In addition to the resources allocated by the mutual aid committees, the JAAWV benefited from the millions paid to it by the government. At no time did the Special Conference on Refugees “reject our suggestion” on

the amount of aid: 25 million in a year and a half, which is infinitely more than what the Jews had collected (the government paid here the wrongs of the General Staff); as for the sums coming from the West, the Committee could retain them[60] for future use.

It is thus that with all these movements of the Jewish population—refugees, displaced persons, but also a good number of volunteers—the war significantly altered the distribution of Jews in Russia; important settlements were established in towns far from the front, mainly Nizhny Novgorod, Voronezh, Penza, Samara, Saratov, but also in the capitals. Although the abolition of the Pale of Settlement did not concern Saint Petersburg and Moscow, these two cities were now practically open. Often, they would go there to join relatives or protectors who had settled there long ago. In the course of memoirs left by contemporaries, one discovers for example a dentist of Petersburg named Flakke: ten-room apartment, footman, servant, cook—well-off Jews were not uncommon, and, in the middle of the war, while there was a shortage of housing in Petrograd, they opened up opportunities for Jews from elsewhere. Many of them changed their place of residence during those years: families, groups of families that left no trace in history, except sometimes in family chronicles of a private nature, such as those of the parents of David Azbel: “Aunt Ida… left the coldness and somnolence of Chernigov at the beginning of the First World War to come and settle in Moscow.”[61] The new arrivals were often of a very modest condition, but some of them came to influential positions, such as Poznanski, a clerk in the Petrograd Military Censorship Commission, who had the upper hand “over all secret affairs”.[62]

Meanwhile, the General Staff mechanically poured out its torrents of directives, sometimes respected, sometimes neglected: to exclude Jews under the banner of all activities outside armed service: secretary, baker, nurse, telephonist, telegrapher. Thus, “in order to prevent the anti-government propaganda supposed to be carried out by Jewish doctors and nurses, they should be assigned not to hospitals or country infirmaries, but ‘to places not conducive to propaganda activities such as, for example, the advanced positions, the transport of the wounded on the battlefield’.”[63] In another directive: expel the Jews out of the Union of Zemstvos, the Union of Cities and the Red Cross, where they concentrate in great numbers to escape armed service (as did also, we note in passage, tens of thousands of Russians), use their advantageous position for propaganda purposes (as did any liberal, radical, or socialist who respected themselves) and, above all, spread rumours about “the incompetence of the high command” (which corresponded to a large extent to reality[64]). Other bulletins warned against the danger of keeping the Jews in positions that brought them into contact with sensitive information: in the services of the Union of Zemstvos of the western front in April 1916, “all the important branches of the administration (including those under the defence secrecy) are in the hands of Jews”, and the names of those responsible for the registration and classification of confidential documents are cited, as well as that of the Director of the Department of Public Information, who, “by his functions, has free access to various services of the army at the rear of the front or in the regions”.[65]

However, there is no evidence that the ranting of the General Staff on the necessity of chasing the Jews from the Zemgor had any tangible results. Always well informed, Lemke observes that “the directives of the military authorities on the exclusion of the Jews” from the Zemgor “were not welcomed”. A bulletin was published stating that “all persons of Jewish confession who are dismissed by order of the authorities shall be reimbursed for two months with salary and travel allowances and with the possibility of being recruited prioritarily in the establishments of the Zemgor at the rear of the front.”[66] (The Zemgor was the darling of the influential Russian press. It is thus that it unanimously declined to reveal its sources of financing: in 25 months of war, on 1 September 1916, 464 million rubles granted by the government—equipment and supplies were delivered directly from state warehouses—compared with only nine million collected by Zemstvos, towns, collects.[67] If the press refused to publish these figures, it is because it would have emptied of its meaning the opposition between the philanthropic and charitable action of the Zemgor and that of a stupid, insignificant, and lame government.)

Economic circumstances and geographical conditions meant that among the army’s suppliers, there were many Jews. A letter of complaint expressing the anger of the “Orthodox-Russian circles of Kiev…, driven by their duty as patriots”, points to Salomon Frankfurt, who occupied a particularly high position, that of “delegate of the Ministry of Agriculture to the supply of the army in bacon” (it must be said that complaints about the disorganisation caused by these requisitions were heard all the way to the Duma). Also in Kiev, an obscure “agronomist of a Zemstvo of the region”, Zelman Kopel, was immortalised by History because of having ordered an excessive requisition just before

Christmas 1916, he deprived of sugar a whole district during the holidays (In this case, a complaint was also lodged against the local administration of the Zemstvos[68]).

In November 1916, the deputy N. Markov, stigmatising in the Duma “the marauders of the rear and trappers” of State property and National Defence, designated, as usual, the Jews in particular: in Kiev, once again, it was Cheftel, a member of the Municipal Council, who blocked the warehouses and let rot more than 2,500 tons of flour, fish, and other products that the town kept in reserve, while at the same time, “the friends of these gentlemen sold their own fish at grossly inflated prices”; it was V. I. Demchenko, elected from Kiev to the Duma, who hid “masses of Jews, rich Jews” (and he enumerates them) “to make them escape military service”; it was also, in Saratov, “the engineer Levy” who supplied “through the intermediary of the commissioner Frenkel” goods to the Military-Industrial Committee at inflated prices.[69] But it should be noted that the military-industrial committees set up by Guchkov[*] were behaving in exactly the same way with the Treasury. So…

In a report of the Petrograd Security Department dated October 1916, we can read: “In Petrograd, trade is exclusively in the hands of Jews who know perfectly the tastes, aspirations, and opinions of the man in the street”; but this report also refers to the widespread opinion on the right according to which, among the people, “the freedom enjoyed by Jews since the beginning of the war” arouses more and more discontent; “it is true, there still exists officially some Russian firms, but they are in fact controlled by Jews: it is impossible to buy or to order anything without the intervention of a Jew.”[70] (Bolshevik publications, such as Kaiourov’s book[71] at that time in Petrograd, did not fail to disguise reality by alleging that in May 1915, during the sacking of German firms and shops in Moscow, the crowd also attacked the Jewish establishments—which is false, and it was even the opposite that happened: during the anti-German riot, the Jews, because of the resemblance of their surnames, protected themselves by hanging on the front of their shop the placard: “This shop is Jewish”—and they were not touched, and Jewish trade was not to suffer in all the years of war.)

However, at the top of the monarchy—in Rasputin’s morbid entourage—, a small group of rather shady individuals played an important role. They not only outraged the right-wing circles—it is how, in May 1916, the French ambassador to Petrograd, Maurice Paleologue, noted in his diary: “A bunch of Jewish financiers and dirty speculators, Rubinstein, Manus, etc., have concluded an agreement with him [Rasputin] and compensate him handsomely for services rendered. On their instructions, he sends notes to ministers, to banks or to various influential personalities.”[72]

Indeed, if in the past it was Baron Ginzburg who intervened openly in favour of the Jews, this action was henceforth conducted secretly by the upstarts who had clustered around Rasputin. There was the banker D. L. Rubinstein (he was the director of a commercial bank in Petrograd, but confidently made his way to the entourage of the throne: he managed the fortunes of Grand Duke Andrei Vladimirovich, made the acquaintance of Rasputin through A. Vyrubova[*], then was decorated with the order of Saint Vladimir, he was given the title of State Counsellor, and therefore of the “Your Excellency”.) But also the industrialist I. P. Manus (director of the Petrograd wagon factory, member of the Putilov factory board, the board of two banks and the Russian Transport Company, also a State Councillor).

Rubinstein attached to Rasputin a permanent “secretary”, Aron Simanovich, a rich jeweller, diamond dealer, illiterate but very skilful and enterprising (but what did Rasputin need of a “secretary”, he who possessed nothing?…)

This Simanovich (“the best among the Jew”, would have scribbled the “starets” on his portrait) published in immigration a little book boasting about the role he had played at that time. We find in it all sorts of gossip without interest, of fabrications (he speaks of the “hundreds of thousands of Jews executed and massacred by order of the Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich”[73]); But, through this scum and those surges of boastfulness, one can glimpse real facts, quite concrete.

For example, the “dentists affair”—for most Jews—which had broken out in 1913: “a veritable dentist’s diploma factory had been elaborated” which flooded Moscow,[74]—their detention gave the right to permanent residence and dispensed of military service. There were about 300 of them (according to Simanovich: 200). The false dentists were condemned to one year in prison, but, on the intervention of Rasputin, they were pardoned.

"During the war… the Jews sought protection from Rasputin against the police or the military authorities," and Simanovitch proudly confides that "many Jewish young men implored his help to escape the army," which, in time of war, gave them the possibility of entering the University; "There was often no legal way"—but Simanovich claims that it was always possible to find a solution. Rasputin "had become the friend and benefactor of the Jews, and unreservedly supported my efforts to improve their condition."[75]

By mentioning the circle of these new favourites, one cannot fail to mention the unparalleled adventurer Manassevich-Manoulov. He was, in turn, an official of the Ministry of the Interior and an agent of the Russian secret police in Paris, which did not prevent him from selling abroad secret documents from the Police Department; he had conducted secret negotiations with Gapon; when Stürmer[*] was appointed Prime Minister, he was entrusted with "exceptional 'secret missions'."[76]

Rubinstein barged into public life by buying out the newspaper *Novoie Vremia* (see chapter 8), hitherto hostile to the Jews. (Irony of history: in 1876, Suvorin had bought this paper with the money of the banker of Warsaw Kroneberg, and at the beginning, well oriented towards the Jews, he opened its columns to them. But, at the beginning of the war between Russia and Turkey, *Novoie Vremia* suddenly changed course, "went to the side of the reaction," and, "as far as the Jewish question was concerned, no longer put a stop to hatred and bad faith."[77]) In 1915, Prime Minister Goremykin[**] and the Minister of the Interior Khvostov, Junior[***] in vain prevented Rubinstein's buyback of the newspaper,[78] he achieved his aims a little later,—but we were already too close to the revolution, all that did not serve much. (Another newspaper on the right, the *Grajdanin* was also partially bought by Manus).

S. Melgounov nicknamed the "quintet" the small group which treated his affairs in the "antechamber"[79] of the tsar —through Rasputin. Given the power of the latter, it was no small matter: dubious characters were in the immediate vicinity of the throne and could exert a dangerous influence on the affairs of the whole of Russia. Britain's ambassador, Buchanan, believed that Rubinstein was linked to the German intelligence services.[80] This possibility cannot be ruled out.

The rapid penetration of German espionage into Russia, and its links with the speculators of the rear, forced General Alekseyev[*] to solicit from the emperor, during the summer of 1916, the authorisation to carry out investigations beyond the area of competence of the General Staff,—and thus was constituted the "Commission of Inquiry of General Batiushin". Its first target was the banker Rubinstein, suspected of "speculative operations with German capital", financial manipulation for the benefit of the enemy, depreciation of the ruble, overpayment of foreign agents for orders placed by the General Stewardship, and speculative operations on wheat in the region of the Volga. On the decision of the Minister of Justice, Rubinstein was arrested on 10 July 1916 and charged with high treason.[81]

It was from the empress in person that Rubinstein received the strongest support. Two months after his arrest, she asked the Emperor "to send him discreetly to Siberia, not to keep him here, so as not to annoy the Jews"—"speak of Rubinstein" with Protopopov[**]. Two weeks later, Rasputin sent a telegram to the emperor saying that Protopopov "implores that no one come to disturb him", including counter-espionage…; "he spoke to me of the detainee with gentleness, as a true Christian."—Another three weeks later, the Empress: "About Rubinstein, he is dying. Send immediately a telegram [to the northwest Front]… for him to be transferred from Pskov under the authority of the Minister of the Interior"—that is, of that good and gentle Christian of Protopopov! And, the following day: "I hope you sent the telegram for Rubinstein, he's dying." And the next day: "Have you arranged for Rubinstein to be handed over to the Minister of the Interior? If he stays in Pskov, he will die,—please, my sweet friend!"[82]

On 6 December, Rubinstein was released—ten days before the assassination of Rasputin, who had just enough time to render him a last service. Immediately afterwards, the Minister Makarov[***], whom the Empress detested, was dismissed. (Shortly thereafter, he will be executed by the Bolsheviks.)—It is true that with the liberation of Rubinstein, the investigation of his case was not finished; he was arrested again, but during the redeeming revolution of February, along with other prisoners who languished in the tsarist gaols, he was freed of the Petrograd prison by the crowd and left ungrateful Russia, as had the time to do so Manassevich, Manus, and Simanovich. (This Rubinstein, we will still have

the opportunity to meet him again.)

For us who live in the 90s of the twentieth century,* this orgy of plundering of State property appears as an experimental model on a very small scale… But what we find in one case or another, it is a government both pretentious and lame that leaves Russia abandoned to its destiny.

*

Educated by the Rubinstein case, the General Staff had the accounts of several banks checked. At the same time, an investigation was opened against the sugar producers of Kiev—Hepner, Tsekhanovski, Babushkin, and Dobry. They had obtained permission to export sugar to Persia; they had made massive shipments, but very little merchandise had been reported by the customs and had reached the Persian market; the rest of the sugar had "disappeared", but, according to some information, it had passed through Turkey—allied to Germany—and had been sold on the spot. At the same time, the price of sugar had suddenly risen in the regions of the South-West, where Russia's sugar industry was concentrated. The sugar deal was conducted in an atmosphere of rigour and intransigence, but the Batiushin commission did not carry out its investigation and forwarded the file to an investigative judge of Kiev, who began by expanding the accused, and then they found support alongside the throne.

As for the Batiushin Commission itself, its composition left much to be desired. Its ineffectiveness in investigating the Rubinstein case was highlighted by Senator Zavadski.[83] In his memoirs, General Lukomski, a member of the Staff, recounts that one of the chief jurists of the commission, Colonel Rezanov, an indisputably competent man, was also found to be quite fond of menus, good restaurants, boozy dinners; another, Orlov, proved to be a renegade who worked in the secret police after 1917, then went to the Whites and, in emigration, would be marked by his provocative conduct. There were probably other shady figures on the committee who did not refuse bribes and had capitalised on the release of the detainees. Through a series of indiscriminate acts, the commission drew the attention of the Military Justice of Petrograd and senior officials of the Ministry of Justice.

However, there was not only the Staff to deal with the problem of speculators, in relation to the activities "of the Jews in general". On 9 January 1916, Acting Director of the Police Department, Kafafov, signed a classified defence directive, which was addressed to all provincial and city governors and all gendarmerie commands. But the "intelligence service" of public opinion soon discovered the secret, and a month later, on 10 February, when all business ceased, Chkheidze* read out this document from the tribune of the Duma. And what could be read there was not only that "the Jews make revolutionary propaganda", but that "in addition to their criminal activity of propaganda… they have set themselves two important objectives: to artificially raise the price of essential commodities and withdraw from circulation common currency"—they thus seek "to make the population lose confidence in the Russian currency", to spread the rumour that "the Russian government is bankrupt, that there is not enough metal to make coins." The purpose of all this, according to the bulletin, was "to obtain the abolition of the Pale of Settlement, because the Jews think that the present period is the most favourable to achieve their ends by maintaining the trouble in the country." The Department did not accompany these considerations with any concrete measure: it was simply "for information".[84]

Here is the reaction of Milyukov: "The method of Rostopchin** is used with the Jews—they are presented to an overexcited crowd, saying: they are the guilty, they are yours, do what you want with them."[85]

During the same days, the police encircled the Moscow Stock Exchange, carried out identity checks among the operators and discovered seventy Jews in an illegal situation; a roundup of the same type took place in Odessa. And this also penetrated the Duma Chamber, causing a real cataclysm—what the Council of Ministers feared so much a year ago was happening: "In the current period, we can not tolerate within the Duma a debate on the Jewish question, a debate which could take on a dangerous form and serve as a pretext for the aggravation of conflicts between nationalities."[86] But the debate really took place and lasted several months.

The most lively and passionate reaction to the bulletin of the Department was that of Shingaryov***—he had no

equal to communicate to his listeners all the indignation which aroused in his heart: “there is not an ignominy, not a turpitude which the State has not been guilty towards the Jew, it which is a Christian state… spreading calumny over a whole people without any foundation… Russian society will be able to cure its evils only when you will withdraw that thorn, this evil that gangrenes the life of the country—the persecution of nationalities… Yes, we hurt for our government, we are ashamed of our State! The Russian army found itself without ammunition in Galicia—“and the Jews would be responsible for it?” “As for the rise in prices, there are many complex reasons for this… Why, in this case, does the bulletin mention only the Jews, why does it not speak of the Russians and even others?” Indeed, prices had soared all over Russia. And the same goes for the disappearance of coins. “And it is in a bulletin of the Department of Police that one can read all this!”[87]

Nothing to object.

Easy to write a bulletin in the back of an office, but very unpleasant to respond to a raging Parliament. Yet this was what its author, Kafafov, had to resolve. He defended himself: the bulletin did not contain any directive, it was not addressed to the population, but to local authorities, for information and not for action; it aroused passions only after being sold by “timorous” civil servants and made public from the rostrum. How strange, continued Kafafov: we are not talking here of other confidential bulletins which have also, probably, been leaked; thus, as early as May 1915, he had himself initialled one of this order: “There is a rise in hatred towards Jews in certain categories of the population of the Empire”, and the Department “demands that the most energetic measures be taken in order to prevent any demonstration going in this direction”, any act of violence of the population directed against the Jews, “to take the most vigorous measures to stifle in the bud the propaganda that begins to develop in certain places, to prevent it from leading to outbreaks of pogroms.” And even, a month earlier, at the beginning of February, this directive sent to Poltava: reinforce surveillance so as to “be able to prevent in time any attempt to pogrom against the Jews.”[88]

And to complain: how is it that that bulletins such as *these* do not interest public opinion, that, those, they are allowed to pass in the utmost silence?

In his heated speech, Shingaryov immediately warned the Duma against the danger of “engaging in debates on the boundless ocean of the Jewish question.” But that was what happened because of the publicity reserved for this bulletin. Moreover, Shingaryov himself pushed clumsily in this direction, abandoning the ground for the defence of the Jews to declare that the real traitors were the Russians: Sukhomlinov[*], Myasoedov, and General Grigoriev, who had shamefully capitulated at Kovno.[89]

This provoked a reaction. Markov[**] objected that he had no right to speak of Sukhomlinov, the latter being for the moment only accused. (The Progressive Bloc was successful in the Sukhomlinov affair, but at the end of the Provisional Government, it itself had to admit that time had been wasted, that there had been no treason there.) Myasoedov had already been convicted and executed (but some facts may suggest that it was also a fabricated affair); Markov limited himself to adding that “he had been hanged in the company of six Jewish spies” (what I did not know: Myasoedov had been judged alone) and that, here is one to six, that was the report.[90]

Among certain proposals contained in the programme that the Progressive Bloc had succeeded in putting together in August 1915, “the autonomy of Poland” seemed somewhat fantastical insofar as it was entirely in the hands of the Germans; “the equality of rights for peasants” did not have to be demanded of the government, because Stolypin had made it happen and it was precisely the Duma which did not endorse it, positing precisely as a condition the simultaneous equality of the Jews; so much so that “the gradual introduction of a process of reducing the limitations of rights imposed on Jews”—even though the evasiveness of this formulation was obvious—nevertheless became the main proposal of the programme of the Bloc. The latter included Jewish deputies[91] and the Yiddish press reported: “The Jewish community wishes the Progressive Bloc a good wind!”

And now, after two years of an exhausting war, heavy losses on the front and a feverish agitation in the rear, the extreme right waved its admonitions: “You have understood that you must explain yourself before the people over your silence about the military superiority of the Germans, your silence about the fight against the soaring prices, and your excessive zeal to want to grant equal rights to the Jews!” That is what you are demanding “of the government, at the

present moment, in the midst of war,—and if it does not meet these demands you blow it off and recognise only one government, the one that will give equality to the Jews!" But "we are surely not going to give equality now, just now that everyone is white-hot against the Jews; in doing so, you only raise public opinion against these unfortunates."[92]

Deputy Friedman refutes the claim that the people are at the height of exasperation: "In the tragic context of the oppression of the Jews, however, there is a glimmer of hope, and I do not want to ignore it: it is the attitude of the Russian populations of the interior provinces towards the Jewish refugees who arrive there." These Jewish refugees "receive help and hospitality". It is "the pledge of our future, our fusion with the Russian people." But he insists that the responsibility for all the misfortunes of the Jews rests with the government, and he lays his accusations at the highest level: "There was never a pogrom when the government did not want it." Through the members of the Duma, "I am addressing the 170 million inhabitants of Russia…: they want to use your hands to lift the knife on the Jewish people of Russia!"[93]

To this was replied: do the deputies of the Duma only know what is thought of in the country? "The country does not write in Jewish newspapers, the country suffers, works… it is bogged down in the trenches, it is there, the country, and not in the Jewish newspapers where work John Does obeying mysterious guidelines." It was even said, "That the press is controlled by the government is an evil, but there is an even greater evil: that the press is controlled by the enemies of the Russian State!"[94]

As Shingaryov had sensed, the liberal majority of the Duma was, now, no longer interested in prolonging the debate on the Jewish question. But the process was on and nothing could stop it. And it was a never-ending series of speeches that came in the middle of the other cases to be dealt with for four months until the end of the fall session.

The right accused the Progressive Bloc: no, the Duma was not going to tackle the problem of rising prices! "You are not going to fight with the banks, the unions, against strikes in the industry, because that would be tantamount to fighting against the Jews." Meanwhile, the Reformist Municipality of Petrograd "gave the town supply to two Israelites, Levenson and Lesman: the first the meat supply, the second the food shops—although he had illegally sold flour to Finland. Other examples of suppliers artificially inflating prices are given.[95] (None of the deputies took it upon himself to defend these speculators.)

After that, it is impossible that the question not come up for discussion, so current during these years of war, of the *numerus clausus*! As we have seen, it had been re-established after the revolution of 1905, but was gradually mitigated by the common practice of day school in high schools and the authorisation given to Jews who had completed their medical studies abroad to pass the State diploma in Russia; other measures were taken in this direction—but not the abrogation pure and simple—in 1915, when the Pale of Settlement was abolished. P. N. Ignatiev, Minister of Public Instruction in 1915–1916, also reduced the *numerus clausus* in higher education institutions.

And in the spring of 1916, the walls of the Duma echoed the debate on this issue at length. The statistics of the Ministry of Education are examined, and Professor Levachev, deputy of Odessa, states that the provisions of the Council of Ministers (authorising the derogatory admission of children of Jews called up for military service) have been arbitrarily extended by the Ministry of Education to the children of Zemgor employees, evacuation agencies, hospitals, as well as persons declaring themselves [deceitfully] dependent on a parent called up for military service. Thus, of the 586 students admitted in 1915 in the first year of medicine at the University of Odessa, "391 are Jews", that is to say two thirds, and that "only one third remain for the other nationalities." At the University of Rostov-on-Don: 81% of Jewish students at the Faculty of Law, 56% at the Faculty of Medicine, and 54% at the Faculty of Sciences.[96]

Gurevich replies to Levachev: this is proof that the *numerus clausus* is useless! "What is the use of the *numerus clausus*, when even this year, when the Jews benefited from a higher than normal arrangement, there was enough room to welcome all Christians who wanted to enter the university?" What do you want—empty classrooms? Little Germany has a large number of Jewish teachers, yet it does not die of it![97]

Markov's objection: "Universities are empty [because Russian students are at war, and they send [to the universities] masses of Jews." "Escaping military service," the Jews "have overwhelmed the University of Petrograd

and, thanks to that, will swell the ranks of the Russian intelligentsia… This phenomenon… is detrimental to the Russian people, even destructive," because every people "is subject to the power of its intelligentsia." "The Russians must protect their elites, their intelligentsia, their officials, their government; the latter must be Russian."[98]

Six months later, in the autumn of 1916, Friedman harped on about this by asking the Duma the following question: "Thus it would be better for our universities to remain empty… it would be better for Russia to find itself without an intellectual elite rather than admit Jews in too great numbers?"[99]

On the one hand, Gurevitch was obviously right: why should the classrooms have been left empty? Let each one do what he has to do. But, in asking the question in these terms, did he not comfort the suspicions and bitterness of the right: therefore, we do not work *together*? One group to make war, the other to study?

(My father, for example—he interrupted his studies at Moscow University and joined the army as a volunteer. It seemed at the time that there was no alternative: to not go to the front would have been dishonourable. Who, among these young Russian volunteers, and even among the professors who remained in the universities, understood that the future of the country was not only played on the battlefields? No one understood it neither in Russia, nor in Europe.)

In the spring of 1916, the debate on the Jewish question was suspended on the grounds that it provoked undesirable agitation in public opinion. But the problem of nationalities was put back on the agenda by an amendment to the law on township Zemstvos. The creation of this new administrative structure was discussed during the winter of 1916–17 during the last months of the existence of the Duma. And then one fine day, when the main speakers had gone for refreshments or had returned to their penates, and that there was little left for the sitting than half of the well-behaved deputies, a peasant of Viatka, named Tarassov, managed to sneak into the tribune. Timidly, he spoke, striving to make the members of the house understand the problem of the amendment: it provides that "everyone is admitted, and the Jews, that is, and the Germans, all those who will come to our township. And to those, what will be their rights? These people who are going to be registered [in our township]… but they are going to take places, and the peasants, no one takes care of them… If it is a Jew who runs the township administration and his wife who is secretary, then the peasants, them, what are their rights?… What is going to happen, where will the peasants be?… And when our valiant warriors return, what will they be entitled to? To stay in the back; but during the war, it was on the front line that they were, the peasants… Do not make amendments that contradict the practical reality of the peasant life, do not give the right to the Jews and the Germans to participate in the elections of the township zemstvos, for they are peoples who will bring nothing useful; on the contrary, they will greatly harm and there will be disorders across the country. We peasants, we are not going to submit to these nationalities."[100]

But in the meantime, the campaign for equal rights for Jews was in full swing. It now enjoyed the support of organisations that had not previously been concerned with the issue, such as the Gvozdev Central Workers' Group[*], which represented the interests of the Russian proletariat. In the spring of 1916, the Workers' Group claimed to be informed that "the reaction [implied: the government and administration of the Ministry of the Interior] is openly preparing a pogrom against the Jews throughout Russia". And Kozma Gvozdev repeated this nonsense at the Congress of Military-Industrial Committees.—In March 1916, in a letter to Rodzianko[**], the Workers' Group protested against the suspension of the debate on the Jewish question in the Duma; And the same Group accused the Duma itself of complacency towards the anti-Semites: "The attitude of the majority at the meeting of 10 March is *de facto* to give its direct support and to reinforce the policy of anti-Jewish pogroms led by the power… By its support of the militant anti-Semitism of the ruling circles, the majority in the Duma is a serious blow to the work of national defence."[101] (They had not agreed, they had not realised that in the Duma it was precisely the left who needed to end the debate.)—The workers also benefited from the support of "Jewish groups" who, according to a report by the Security Department in October 1916, "have overwhelmed the capital and, without belonging to any party, are pursuing a policy violently hostile to the power."[102]

And the power in all this? Without direct evidence, it can be assumed that within the ministerial teams that succeeded each other in 1916, the decision to proclaim equal rights for the Jews was seriously considered. This had been mentioned more than once by Protopopov, who had already succeeded, it seems, in turning Nicholas II in this direction. (Protopopov also had an interest in going quickly to cut short the campaign that the left had set in motion against him.)

—And General Globachev, who was the last to direct the Department of Security before the revolution, writes in his memoirs, in the words of Dobrovolsky, who was also the last Minister of Justice of the monarchy: “The bill on equal rights for the Jews was already ready [in the months that preceded the revolution] and, in all likelihood, the law would have been promulgated for the 1917 Easter celebrations.”[103]

But in 1917, the Easter celebrations were to take place under a completely different system. The ardent aspirations of our radicals and liberals would then have come true.

“Everything for victory!”—Yes, but “not with that power!” Public opinion, both among the Russians and among the Jews, as well as the press, all were entirely directed towards Victory, were the first to claim it,—only, *not with this government! Not with this tsar!* All were still persuaded of the correctness of the simple and brilliant reasoning they had held at the beginning of the war: before it ends (because afterwards it would be more difficult) and by winning a victory over victory on the Germans, to throw down the tsar and change the political regime.

And that is when the equal rights for the Jews would come.

*

We have examined in many ways the circumstances in which took place one hundred and twenty years of common life between Russians and Jews within the same State. Among the difficulties, some have found a solution over time, others emerged and increased in the course of the years prior to the spring of 1917. But the evolving nature of the processes in motion visibly taking over and promised a constructive future.

And it was at that moment that a blast disintegrated the political and social system of Russia—and thus the fruits of evolution, but also the military resistance to the enemy, paid for with so much blood, and finally the prospects for a future of fulfilment: it was the revolution of February.

Footnotes

1. SJE, t. 2, 1982, pp. 313–314.
2. *V. I. Lenin*, Complete Works in 55 volumes [in Russian], 1958–1965, t. 49, p. 64.
3. *A. Voronel*, “22”, Tel Aviv, 1986, no. 50, p. 155.
4. SJE, t. 7, p. 356.

- Vladimir Purishkevich (1870–1920), monarchist, opponent of Rasputin, the assassination of whom he participated in. Arrested in 1917, then given amnesty, he participated in the White movement and died of typhus in Novorossiysh.

5. *D. S. Pasmanik*, Rousskaya revoliutsia i ievreisstvo (Bolchevizm i Ioudaizm) (The Russian Revolution and the Jews [Bolshevism and Judaism]), Paris, 1923, p. 143.
6. SJE, t. 7, p. 356.

- Basile Choulguine (1878–1976), leader of the right wing of the Duma with whom he breaks at the time of the Beilis affair. Participates in the Progressive Bloc. Collects with Guchkov the abdication of Nicholas II. Immigrated to Yugoslavia until 1944, he was captured there and spent twelve years in camps. Dies almost centenary.

7. *V. V. Choulguine*, “Chto nam v nikh ne nravitsa…” Ob Antisemitism v rossii (“What we do not like about them…” On anti-Semitism in Russia), Paris. 1929, p. 67.
8. SJE, t. 7, p. 356.
9. *Pasmanik, op. cit.*, p. 144.
10. *G. B. Sliosberg, op. cit.*, t. 3, pp. 316–317.
11. *I G. Froumkine*, Iz istorii ruskovo ievreistava, [Sb.] Kniga o ruskom evreïstve: Ot 1860 godov do Revolutsii 1917 g. (Aspects of the History of Russian Jews), in BJWR, pp. 85–86.
12. *Sliosberg, op. cit.*, t. 3, p. 324.
13. *Pasmanik, op. cit.*, p. 144.
14. For example: SJE, t. 7, p. 357.

15. *Father Georgui Chavelsky*, Vospominania poslednevo protopresvitera ruskoï armii i flota (Memoirs of the last chaplain of the Russian Army and Russian Hood) v. 2-kh t, t. 1, New York, ed. Chekhov, 1954, p. 271.
16. *Mikhail Lemke*, 250 dnei v tsarskoy Stavke (25 sentences 1915—ioulia 1916) (250 days in the General Staff (25 Sept. 1915-July 1916), PG GIZ, 1920, p. 353.
17. Progressivny blok v 1915–1916 gg (The Progressive Bloc in 1915–1916), Krasny arkhiv: Istoritcheskïï Journal Tsentrarkhiva RSFSR, M. GIZ, 1922–1941, vol. 52, 1932, p. 179.
18. *G. S. Doumbadze* (Vospominania), Biblioteka-fond "Rousskoie Zaroubejie", f / l, A-9, p. 5.
19. *Father Chavelsky, op. cit.*, t. 1, p. 272.
20. *Lemke, op. cit.*, p. 37.
21. *Father Chavelsky, op. cit.*, t. 1, pp. 272–273.
22. Novaya Zaria, San Francisco, 1960, 7 May, p. 3.
23. *Lemke*, op. cit.*, p. 325.
24. SJE, t. 2, p. 24.
25. SJE, t. 7, p. 356.
26. *Father Chavelsky, op. cit.*, p. 271.
27. SJE, t. 7, p. 357.
28. *Sliosberg, op. cit.*, t. 3, p. 325.
29. Dokoumenty o presledovanii ievreev (Documents on the persecution of the Jews), Arkhiv Rousskoi Revolutsii (Archives of the Russian Revolution), izdavayemy I.V. Gessenom, Berlin: Slovo, 1922–1937, t. 19, 1928, pp. 245–284.
30. *A. A. Goldenweiser*, Pravovoïc polojenie ievreyev v Rossii (The legal situation of Jews in Russia), BJWR-1, p. 135.
31. *G. I. Aronson*, V borbe za grajdanskie i nalsionainyc prava Obchtchestvennye tetchenia v rousskom evreïstve (The struggle for civil and national rights: the movements of opinion within the Jewish community of Russia), BJWR-1, p. 232.
32. Novoie Vremia, 1917, 13 April, p. 3.
33. *Sliosberg, op. cit.*, t. 1, Introduction by V. Jabotinsky, p. xi.
34. *L. Andreyev*, Pervaya stoupen (First Step), Shchit (the Shield), 1916, p. 5.
35. *Sliosberg, op. cit.*, t. 3, pp. 343–344.
36. *Ibidem*, p. 344.
37. *Lemke, op. cit.*, p. 310.
38. *Sliosberg, op. cit.*, t. 3, p. 345.
39. *G. A. Ziv*, Trotsky: Kharakteiistika. Po litchym vospominaniam (Trotsky: a characteristic, personal memories), New York. Narodopravstvo, 1921, 30 June, pp. 60–63.
40. *German Bernsrein*, Retch, 1917, 30 June, pp. 1–2.
41. Progressivny blok v 1915–1917 gg., Krasny arkhiv, 1932, vol. 50–51, p. 136.

- Andrei Shingaryov(1869–1918), one of the leaders of the Cadet party, was a member of the first Provisional Government in 1917. Arrested by the Bolsheviks and massacred in his prison.
    42. Mejdunarodnoïe polojenie tsarskoi Rossii vo vremia mirovoï voïny (The international situation of tsarist Russia during the world war), Krasny arkhiv, 1934, vol. 64, pp. 5–14.
    43. Doklad P. N. Milioukova v Voïenno-morskoï komissii Gosoud. Doumy 19 iounia 1916g., Krasny arkhiv, 1933, t. 58, pp. 13–14.
    44. Encyclopædia Judaica, Jerusalem, 1971, vol. 14, p. 961.
    45. *A. Solzhenitsyn*, Krasnoye Koleso (The Red Wheel), t. 3, M. Voïenizdat, 1993, pp. 259–263, (French translation: March seventeen, t. 1, Paris: Fayard).
    - Close collaborator of Stolypin, Minister of Agriculture (1906–1915), dies in emigration (1857–1921).

46. Tiajëlye dni. Sekretnye zasedania soveta ministrov. 16 ioulia–sentiabria 1915 (The difficult days, the secret meetings of the Council of Ministers, 16 July–September 1915). Sost. A. N. Yakhontov, Archives of the Russian Revolution, 1926, vol. 18, pp. 47–48, 57.
47. *Ibidem*, p. 12.
48. SJE, t. 7, pp. 358–359.
49. *Ibidem*, p. 359.
50. *Sliosberg*, t. 3, p. 341.
51. *I. L Teitel*, Iz moiii jizni za 40 let (Memories of 40 years of my life), Paris: I. Povolotski i ko., 1925, p. 210.
52. *Sliosberg*, t. 3, p. 342.
53. SJE, t. 2, p. 345.
54. *D. Lvovitch*, L. Bramson i Soiouz ORT (L. Bramson and the UJC), JW-2, New York, 1944, p. 29.
55. *I. M. Troitsky*, Samodeiatetnost i camopomochtch evreiev v Rossii (The spirit of initiative and mutual help among the Jews of Russia), BJWR-1, pp. 479–480, 485–489.
56. *Aronson*, BJWR-1, p. 232; *I. Troitsky, ibidem*, p. 497.

57. *Aronson, op. cit.*, p. 232.
58. *I. Troitsky, op. cit.*, p. 484.
59. *Aronson, op. cit.*, p. 230.
60. *Sliosberg, op. cit.*, t. 3, pp. 329–331.
61. *D. Azbel*, Do, vo vremia i posle (Before, during and after), Vremya i my, New York, Jerusalem, Paris. 1989, no. 104, pp. 192–193.
62. *Lemke, op. cit.*, p. 468.
63. SJE, t. 7, p. 357.
64. Archives of the Russian Revolution, 1928, t. XIX, pp. 274, 275.
65. *Lemke, op. cit.*, p. 792.
66. *Ibidem*, p. 792.
67. *S. Oldenburg*, Tsarstvovanie Imperatora Nikolai II (the reign of Emperor Nicholas II), t. 2, Munich, 1949, p. 192.
68. Iz zapisnooi knijki arkhivista, Soob. Mr. Paozerskovo (Notebooks of an Archivist, Comm. by M. Paozerski), Krasny Arckhiv, 1926, t. 18, pp. 211–212.
69. Gosudarstvennaya Duma—Tchetvërty sozyv (Fourth Duma of the Empire), transcript of the proceedings, 22 Nov. 1916, pp. 366–368.

- Alexander Guchkov (1882–1936), founder and leader of the Octobrist party, president of the third Duma (March 1910–March 1911), president of the All-Russia War Industry Committee, became Minister of War and Navy in the first temporary government. Emigrated in 1918. He died in Paris.

70. Politicschkoye polojenie Rossii nakanoune Fevralskoi revoloutsii (Political situation in Russia on the eve of the February Revolution), Krasny arkhiv, 1926, t. 17, pp. 17, 23.
71. *V. Kairorov*, Petrogradskie rabotchie v gody imperialistitcheskoy vonny (Workers of Petrograd during the years of the imperialist war), M., 1930.
72. *Maurice Paleologue*, Tsraskaia Rossia nakanoune revolioutsii (Imperial Russia on the eve of the revolution), M., Pd., GIZ, 1923, p. 136.

- Anna Vyrubova (1884–1964), maid of honour of the Empress of which she was for a long time the best friend, fanatic admirer of Rasputin, permanent intermediary between the imperial couple and the starets. She was arrested in 1917, freed and re-arrested, and managed to escape to Finland where she would live for more than 45 years, completely forgotten about.

73. *A. Simanovich*, Rasputin i ievrei. Vospominania litchnovo sekretaria Grigoria Rasputin (Rasputin and the Jews, Memoirs of the personal secretary of Grigory Rasputin), [Sb.] Sviatoï tchërt. Taïna Grigoria Raspoutina: Vospom., Dokoumenty, Materialy sledstv. Komissii. M. Knijnaya Palata, 1991, pp. 106–107.
74. *Sliosberg, op. cit.*, t. 3, p. 347.
75. *Simanovitch*, pp. 89, 100, 102, 108.

- Rasputin's *protégé*, became President of the Council of Ministers (2 February–23 November 1916), with his duties as Minister of the Interior (16 March–17 July) and Foreign Affairs (20 July–23 November). After February, he was arrested and imprisoned at the Pierre-et-Paul fortress where he died on 2 September 1917.
    76. *S. Melgunov*, Legenda o separatnom mire. Kanoun revolioutsii (The Legend of the Separated Peace, The Eve of the Revolution), Paris, 1957, pp. 263, 395, 397.
    77. JE, t. 11, pp. 758, 759.
    - Ivan Goremykin (1839–1917), Prime Minister first in April–July 1906, then from January 1914 to January 1916.
        - Alexis Khvostov, Junior (1872–1918), leader of the rights in the fourth Duma, Minister of the Interior in 1915–1916. Shot by the Bolsheviks.

78. Pismo ministra vnoutrennikh del A. N. Khvostova Predsedateliou soveta ministrov I. L. Goremykinou ot 16 dek. 1915 (Letter from the Minister of the Interior A. N. Khvostov to the President of the Council of Ministers I. L. Goremykin, dated 16 December 1915), Delo naroda, 1917, 21 March, p. 2.
79. *Melgunov, op. cit.*, p. 289.
80. *Ibidem*, p. 402.

- Mikhail Alekseyev (1857–1918), then Chief of Staff of the Supreme Commander. Will advise the tsar to abdicate. Supreme Commander until 3 June 1917. After October, organiser of the first White army, in the Don.
    81. *V. N. Semennikor*, Politika Romanovykh nakanoune revolioutsii. Ot Antanty—k Guermanii (Politics of the Romanovs on the Eve of the Revolution: From the Agreement to Germany), M., L., GIZ, 1926, pp. 117, 118, 125.
    - Last tsarist Minister of the Interior. Accused of intelligence with Germany (perpetrated in Sweden during the summer of

1916 on the occasion of a trip to England of a delegation of the Duma). Imprisoned by the Provisional Government. Executed by the Bolsheviks.

82. Pisma imperatritsy Aleksandry Fëdorovny k Imperatorou Nikolaiou II / Per. S angi. V. D. Nabokoa (Letters of the Empress Alexandra Fecorovna to the Emperor Nicholas II / trad. from English by V. D. Nabokov), Berlin Slovo, 1922, pp. 202, 204, 211, 223, 225, 227.

- Minister of Justice from 20 July 1916 to 2 January 1917. Executed by the Cheka in September 1918.

- Time when the writing of this present volume was completed, and allusion to the state of Yeltsinian Russia.

83. *S. V. Zavadski*, Na velikom izlome (The Great Fracture), Archives of the Russian Revolution, 1923, t. 8, pp. 19–22.

- Menshevik leader, deputy to the third and fourth Dumas; In February 1917, president of the Petrograd Soviet. Emigrated in 1921, committed suicide in 1926.

84. Archives of the Russian Revolution, 1925, vol. 19, pp. 267–268.

- Governor of Moscow at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It was long believed that he had set fire to the city when the French armed there in 1812. Father of the Countess of Segur.

85. Stenographic record of the debates of the Fourth Duma. 10 February 1916, p. 1312.
86. Archives of the Russian Revolution, 1926, t. 18, p. 49.

- Andrei Shingaryov(1869–1918), Zemstvo doctor, leader of the Cadet party, will be Minister of Agriculture in the first Provisional Government, and Finance in the second. Slaughtered in his hospital bed on 18 January 1918.

87. Stenographic Record of the Debates of the Fourth Duma, 8 March 1916, pp. 3037–3040.
88. *Ibidem*, pp. 3137–3141.

- Minister of War ineffective from 1909 to 1915, arrested on 3 May 1916, released in November through Rasputin.

89. *Ibidem*, pp. 3036–3037.

- Nikolai Markov (1876–1945), called at the Duma "Markov-II" to distinguish him from homonyms. Leader of the extreme right. In November 1918, he went to Finland, then to Berlin and Paris where he directed a monarchist revue, The Two Headed Eagle. He moved to Germany in 1936, where he directed an anti-Semitic publication in Russian. Died in Wiesbaden.

90. *Ibidem*, p. 5064.
91. SJE, t. 7, p. 359.
92. Stenographic Record of the Debates of the Fourth Duma, February 1916, p. 1456 and 28–29 February 1916, p. 2471.
93. *Ibidem*, pp. 1413–1414, 1421, 1422.
94. *Ibidem*, pp. 1453–1454, 2477.
95. *Ibidem*, p. 4518.
96. *Ibidem*, pp. 3360–3363.
97. *Ibidem*, p. 3392.
98. *Ibidem*, pp. 1456, 3421, 5065.
99. *Ibidem*, p. 90.
100. *Ibidem*, pp. 1069–1071.

- Also said Kouzma Gvozdiov (born in 1883), a worker, a Menshevik leader, a defender, president of the Central Workers' Group; After February, member of the Central Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet, Minister of Labour of the Fourth Provisional Government. In camp or in prison from 1930 onwards.

- President of the Duma from 1911 to 1917.

101. K istorii gvosdevchtchiny (Contribution to the history of the Gvozdev movement), Krasny arkhiv. 1934, t. 67, p. 52.
102. Politikchkoye polojenie Rossii nakanoune Fevralskoi revolioutsii (Political situation in Russia on the eve of the February Revolution), Krasny arkhiv, 1926, t. 17, p. 14.
103. *K. I. Globatchev*, Pravda o russkoï revolutionsii: Vospominania byvchevo Nachalnika Petrogradskovo Okhrannovo Otdelenia. Dekabr 1922 (The truth about the Russian revolution: memoirs of the former head of the Petrograd Security Department, December 1922), Khranenie Koloumbiïskovo ouniversiteta, machinopis, p. 41.

Chapter 13: The February Revolution

The 123-year-old history of unequal citizenship of the Jewish people in Russia, from the Act of Catherine the Great of 1791, ended with the February Revolution.

It bears looking into the atmosphere of those February days; what was the state of society by the moment of emancipation?

There were no newspapers during the first week of the Revolutionary events in Petrograd. And then they began trumpeting, not looking for the ways to rebuild the state but vying with each other in denouncing all the things of the past. In an unprecedented gesture, the newspaper of the Constitutional Democrats (Kadets), Rech, announced that from now on "all Russian life must be rebuilt from the roots."[1] (A thousand-year life! — why, all of a sudden from "the roots"?) And the Stock-Market News announced a program of action: "Yank, yank all these weed-roots out! No need to worry that there might be some useful plants among them — it's better to weed them all even at the price of unavoidable innocent victims."[2] (Was this really March 1917 or March 1937?) The new Minister of Foreign Affairs Milyukov bowed and scraped: "Up to now we blushed in front of our allies because of our government…. Russia was a dead weight for our allies." [3]

Rarely in those beginning days was it possible to hear reasonable suggestions about rebuilding Russia. The streets of Petrograd were in chaos, the police were non-functional and all over the city there was continuous disorderly gunfire. But everything poured into a general rejoicing, though for every concrete question, there was a mess of thoughts and opinions, a cacophony of debating pens. All the press and society agreed on one thing — the immediate legislative enactment of Jewish equality. Fyodor Sologub eloquently wrote in the Birzheviye Vedomosti: "The most essential beginning of the civil freedom, without which our land cannot be blessed, the people cannot be righteous, national achievements would not be sanctified … — is the repeal of all religious and racial restrictions."

The equality of Jews advanced very quickly. The 1st of March [old calendar style], one day before the abdication, a few hours before the infamous "Order No. 1," which pushed the army to collapse, V. Makhlakov and M. Adzhemov, two commissars of the Duma Committee delegated to the Ministry of Justice, had issued an internal Ministry of Justice directive, ordering to enlist all Jewish-assistants to attorneys-at-law into the Guild of Judicial Attorneys. "Already by the 3rd of March … the Chairman of the State Duma, M. Rodzianko, and the Prime Minister of the Provisional Government, Prince G. Lvov, signed a declaration which stated that one of the main goals of the new government is a `repeal of all restrictions based upon religion, nationality and social class.´"[4] Then, on the 4th of March, the Defense Minister Guchkov proposed to open a path for the Jews to become military officers, and the Minister of Education Manuelov proposed to repeal the percentage quotas on the Jews. Both proposals were accepted without obstacles. On the 6th of March the Minister of Trade and Manufacturing, Konovalov, started to eliminate "national restrictions in corporative

legislation," that is, a repeal of the law forbidding purchase of land by companies with Jewish executives.

These measures were quickly put into practice. By the 8th of March in Moscow, 110 Jewish "assistants" were raised to the status of attorneys-at-law; by March 9th in Petrograd — 124 such Jews[5]; by the 8th of March in Odessa — 60.[6] On the 9th of March the City Duma of Kiev, not waiting for the upcoming elections, included in its body five Jews with voting power.[7]

And here — on March 20 the Provisional Government made a resolution, prepared by the Minister of Justice, A. Kerensky, with the participation of members of the political bureau of Jewish deputies in the 4th State Duma … legislated an act, published on March 22, that repealed "all restrictions on the rights of Russian citizens, regardless of religious creed, dogma or nationality." This was, in essence, the first broad legislative act of the Provisional Government. "At the request of the political bureaus (of Jewish deputies), the Jews were not specifically mentioned in the resolution."[8]

But in order to "repeal all the restrictions on Jews in all of our laws, in order to uproot … completely the inequality of Jews," G.B. Sliozberg recalls, "it was necessary to make a complete list of all the restrictions … and the collation of the list of laws to be repealed required great thoroughness and experience." (This task was undertaken by Sliozberg and L.M. Bramson.)[9] The Jewish Encyclopedia says: "The Act listed the statutes of Russian law that were being abolished by the Act — almost all those statutes (there were nearly 150) contained some or other anti-Jewish restrictions. Subject to repeal were, in part, all proscriptions connected to the Pale of Settlement; thereby its factual liquidation in 1915 was legally validated.[10] The restrictions were removed layer by layer: travel, habitation, educational institutions, participation in local self-government, the right to acquire property anywhere in Russia, participation in government contracts, from stock exchanges, hiring servants, workers and stewards of a different religion, the right to occupy high positions in the government and military service, guardianship and trusteeship. Recalling a cancellation of an agreement with the United States, they repealed similar restrictions on "foreigners who are not at war with the Russian government," mainly in reference to Jews coming from the United States.

The promulgation of the Act inspired many emotional speeches. Deputy Freedman of the State Duma asserted: "For the past thirty-five years the Jews have been subjected to oppression and humiliation, unheard of and unprecedented even in the history of our long suffering people…. All of it … was the result of state-sponsored anti-Semitism."[11] Attorney O.O. Gruzenberg stated: "If the pre-Revolution Russian government was a vast and monstrous prison, … then its most stinking, terrible cell, its torture chamber was carted away for us, the six-million Jewish people. And for the first time the Jewish child learned … about this usurious term `interest´ in the state school…. Like hard labor camp prisoners on their way to camp, all Jews were chained together as despised aliens…. The drops of blood of our

fathers and mothers, the drops of blood of our sisters and brothers fell on our souls, there igniting and enlivening the unextinguishable Revolutionary fire."[12]

Rosa Georgievna, the wife of Vinaver, recalls: "The events (of the March 1917 Revolution) coincided with the Jewish Passover. It looked like this was a second escape from Egypt. Such a long, long path of suffering and struggle has passed, and how quickly everything had happened. A large Jewish meeting was called," at which Milyukov spoke: "At last, a shameful spot has been washed away from Russia, which can now bravely step into the ranks of civilized nations." Vinaver "proposed to the gathering to build a large Jewish public house in Petrograd in memory of the meeting, which will be called "The House of Freedom."[13]

Three members of the State Duma, M. Bomash, E. Gurevich and N. Freedman published an "open letter to the Jewish people": that now "our military misfortunes could deal grave damage to the still infirm free Russia. Free Jewish warriors … will draw new strength for the ongoing struggle, with the tenfold energy extending the great feat of arms." And here was the natural plan: "The Jewish people should quickly re-organize their society. The long-obsolete forms of our communal life must be renewed on the free, democratic principles."[14]

The author-journalist David Eisman responded to the Act with an outcry: "Our Motherland! Our Fatherland! They are in trouble! With all our hearts … we will defend our land…. Not since the defense of the Temple has there been such a sacred feat of arms."

And from the memoirs of Sliozberg: "The great fortune to have lived to see the day of the declaration of emancipation of Jews in Russia and the elimination of our lack of rights — everything I have fought for with all my strength over the course of three decades — did not fill me with the joy as it should had been," because the collapse had begun right away.[15]

And seventy years later one Jewish author expressed doubts too: "Did that formal legislative Act really change the situation in the country, where all legal norms were precipitously losing their power?"[16]

We answer: in hindsight, from great distance, one should not downplay the significance of what was achieved. Then, the Act suddenly and dramatically improved the situation of the Jews. As for the rest of the country, falling, with all its peoples, into an abyss — that was the unpredictable way of the history.

The most abrupt and notable change occurred in the judiciary. If earlier, the Batyushin's commission on bribery investigated the business of the obvious crook D. Rubinstein, now the situation became reversed: the case against Rubinstein was dropped, and Rubinstein paid a visit to the Extraordinary Investigatory Commission in the Winter Palace and successfully demanded prosecution of the Batyushin's commission itself. Indeed, in March 1917 they arrested General Batyushin, Colonel Rezanov, and other investigators. The investigation of activities of that commission began in April, and, as it turned out, the extortion of bribes

from the bankers and sugar factory owners by them was apparently significant. Then the safes of Volga-Kama, Siberian, and Junker banks, previously sealed up by Batyushin, were unsealed and all the documents returned to the banks. (Semanovich and Manus were not so lucky. When Simanovich was arrested as secretary to Rasputin, he offered 15,000 rubles to the prison convoy guards, if they would let him make a phone call, yet "the request was, of course, turned down."[17] As for Manus, suspected of being involved in shady dealings with the German agent Kolyshko, he battled the counterintelligence agents who came for him by shooting through his apartment's door. After his arrest, he fled the country). The situation in the Extraordinary Investigatory Commission of the Provisional Government can be manifestly traced by records of interrogations in late March. Protopopov was asked how he came to be appointed to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and in response he mentioned the directive issued by him: "the residence rights of the Jews were significantly expanded" in Moscow. Asked about the priorities of his Ministry, he first recalled the foodstuffs affair, and, after then the progressive issue — the Jewish question…." The director of the Department of Police, A.T. Vasilyev didn't miss an opportunity to inform the interrogators that he helped defend the sugar factory owners (Jews): "Gruzenberg called me in the morning in my apartment and thanked me for my cooperation"; "Rosenberg … visited me to thank me for my efforts on his behalf."[18] In this way, the accused tried to get some leniency for themselves.

A notable aspect of the weeks of March was an energetic pursuit of known or suspected Judeophobes. The first one arrested, on February 27, was the Minister of Justice Scheglovitov. He was accused of personally giving the order to unjustly pursue the case against Beilis. In subsequent days, the Beilis's accusers, the prosecutor Vipper and Senator Chaplinsky, were also arrested. (However, they were not charged with anything specific, and in May 1917 Vipper was merely dismissed from his position as the chief prosecutor of the Criminal Department of the Senate; his fate was sealed later, by the Bolsheviks). The court investigator Mashkevich was ordered to resign — for during the Beilis trial he had sanctioned not only expert witness testimony against the argument on the ritual murder, but he also allowed a second expert testimony arguing for the case of such murder. The Minister of Justice Kerensky requested transfer of all materials of the Beilis case from the Kiev Regional Court,[19] planning a loud re-trial, but during the stormy course of 1917 that didn't happen. The chairman of the "Union of the Russian People," Dmitry Dubrovin, was arrested and his archive was seized; the publishers of the far-right newspapers Glinka-Yanchevsky and Poluboyarinova were arrested too; the bookstores of the Monarchist Union were simply burned down.

For two weeks, they hunted for the fugitives N. Markov and Zamyslovsky, doing nightly searches for two weeks in St. Petersburg, Kiev and Kursk. Zamislovsky was hunted for his participation in the case against Beilis, and Markov, obviously, for his speeches in the State Duma. At the same time, they didn't touch Purishkevich, one assumes, because of his Revolutionary speeches in the Duma and his participation in the murder of Rasputin. An ugly

rumor arose that Stolypin took part in the murder of Iollos, and in Kremenchuk, a street that had previously been named after Stolypin was renamed after Iollos.

Over all of Russia there were hundreds of arrests, either because of their former positions or even because of their former attitudes.

It should be noted that the announcement of Jewish equality did not cause a single pogrom. It is worth noticing not only for the comparison to 1905, but also because, all through March and April, all major newspapers were constantly reporting the preparation of pogroms, and that somewhere, the pogroms had already supposedly begun.

Rumors started on March 5, that somewhere either in Kiev or Poltava Province, Jewish pogroms were brewing, and someone in Petrograd put up a hand-written anti-Jewish flyer. As a result, the Executive Committee of Soviet Workers and Soldiers' Deputies formed a special "visiting commission … led by Rafes, Aleksandrovich, and Sukhanov." Their task was to "delegate commissars to various towns, with the first priority to go into the regions where the Black Hundreds, the servants of the old regime, are trying to sow ethnic antagonism among the population."[20] In the newspaper Izvestia SRSD [Soviet Workers and Soldiers' Deputies] there was an article Incitement to Pogrom: "It would be a huge mistake, tantamount to a crime, to close our eyes to a new attempt of the overthrown dynasty…" — because it is them [translator's note -- the Monarchists] who organize the trouble…. "In Kiev and Poltava provinces, among the underdeveloped, backwards classes of the population at this moment there is incitement against Jews…. Jews are blamed for the defeats of our Army, for the revolutionary movement in Russia, and for the fall of the monarchy…. It's an old trick, … but all the more dangerous because of its timing…. It is necessary to quickly take decisive measures against the pogrom instigators."[21] After this the commander of the Kiev Military District General Khodorovich issued an order: all military units are to be on high alert and be ready to prevent possible anti-Jewish riots.

Long after this, but still in April, in various newspapers, every two or three days they published rumors of preparations for Jewish pogroms,[22] or at the very least, about moving of piles of "pogrom literature" by railroads. Yet the most stubborn rumors circulated about a coming pogrom in Kishinev — that was to happen at the end of March, right between the Jewish and (Russian) Orthodox Passovers, as happened in 1903.

And there were many more such alarming press reports (one even said that the police in Mogilev was preparing a pogrom near the Headquarters of Supreme High Command). Not one of these proved true.

One need only get acquainted with the facts of those months, to immerse oneself in the whole "February" atmosphere — of the defeated Right and the triumphant Left, of the stupor and confusion of the common folk — to dismiss outright any realistic possibility of anti-Jewish pogroms. But how could ordinary Jewish residents of Kiev or Odessa forget those

horrible days twelve years before? Their apprehension, their wary caution to any motion in that direction was absolutely understandable.

The well-informed newspapers were a different story. The alarms raised by the newspapers, by enlightened leaders of the liberal camp, and half-baked socialist intellectuals — one cannot call this anything except political provocation. Provocation, however, that fortunately didn't work.

One actual episode occurred at the Bessarabian bazaar in Kiev, on April 28: a girl stole a piece of ribbon in a Jewish shop and ran away; the store clerk caught up to her and began to beat her. A crowd rushed to lynch the clerk and the store owner, but the police defended them. In another incident, in the Rogachevsky district, people, angered by exorbitant prices, smashed the stores — including Jewish ones.

Where and by whom was the Jewish emancipation met with hostility? Those were our legendary revolutionary Finland, and our "powerful" ally, Romania. In Finland (as we learned in Chapter 10 from Jabotinsky) the Jews were forbidden to reside permanently, and since 1858, only descendants of "Jewish soldiers who served here" (in Finland, during the Crimean War) were allowed to settle. "The passport law of 1862 … confirmed that Jews were forbidden entry into Finland," and "temporary habitation [was permitted] at the discretion of a local governor"; the Jews could not become Finnish citizens; in order to get married, a Jew had to go to Russia; the rights of Jews to testify in Finnish courts were restricted. Several attempts to mitigate the restriction of the civil rights of the Jews in Finland were not successful.[23] And now, with the advent of Jewish equal rights in Russia, Finland, not having yet announced its complete independence (from Russia), did not legislate Jewish equality. Moreover, they were deporting Jews who had illegally moved to Finland, and not in a day, but in an hour, on the next train out. (One such case on March 16 caused quite a splash in the Russian press.) But Finland was always extolled for helping the revolutionaries, and liberals and socialists stopped short of criticizing her. Only the Bund sent a wire to very influential Finnish socialists, reprimanding them that this "medieval" law was still not repealed. The Bund, "the party of the Jewish proletariat, expresses strong certainty that you will take out that shameful stain from free Finland."[24] However, in this certainty, the Bund was mistaken.

And a huge alarm was raised in the post-February press about the persecution of Jews in Romania. They wrote that in Jassy it was even forbidden to speak Yiddish at public meetings. The All-Russian Zionist Student Congress "Gekhover" proposed "to passionately protest this civil inequality of Jews in Romania and Finland, which is humiliating to the world Jewry and demeaning to worldwide democracy."[25] At that time Romania was weakened by major military defeats. So the Prime Minister Bratianu was making excuses in Petrograd in April saying that "most of the Jews in Romania … migrated there from Russia," and in particular that "prompted Romanian government to limit the political rights of the Jews"; he promised equality soon.[26] However, in May we read: "In fact, nothing is happening in that

direction."[27] (In May, the Romanian communist Rakovsky reported that "the situation of the Jews in Romania is … unbearable"; the Jews were blamed for the military defeat of the country; they were accused of "fraternizing" with Germans in the occupied parts of the country. "If the Romanian government was not afraid [to anger their allies in the Entente], then one would fear for the very lives of the Jews.")[28]

The worldwide response among the allies of the February Revolution was expressed in a tone of deep satisfaction, even ecstasy among many, but in this response there was also a short-sighted calculation: that now Russia will become invincible in war. In Great Britain and the USA there were large meetings in support of the Revolution and the rights of the Jews. (I wrote about some of these responses in March 1917 in Chapters 510 and 621). From America they offered to send a copy of the Statue of Liberty to Russia. (Yet as the situation in Russia continued to deteriorate, they never got around to the Statue). On March 9 in the House of Commons of the British Parliament the Minister of Foreign Affairs was asked a question about the situation of the Jews in Russia: does he plan to consult with the Russian government regarding guarantees to the Russian Jews for the future and reparations for the past? The answer showed the full trust that the British government had for the new Russian government.[29] From Paris, the president of the International Jewish Union congratulated [Russian Prime Minister] Prince Lvov, and Lvov answered: "From today onward liberated Russia will be able to respect the faiths and customs of all of its peoples forever bound by a common religion of love of their homeland." The newspapers Birzhevka, Rech and many others reported on the sympathies of Jacob Schiff, "a well known leader of North American circles that are hostile to Russia." He wrote: "I was always the enemy of Russian absolutism, which mercilessly persecuted my co-religionists. Now let me congratulate … the Russian people for this great act which they committed so perfectly."[30] And now he "invites the new Russia to conduct broad credit operations in America."[31] Indeed, "at the time he provided substantial credit to the Kerensky government."[32] Later in emigration, the exiled Russian right-wing press published investigative reports attempting to show that Schiff actively financed the Revolution itself. Perhaps Schiff shared the short-sighted Western hope that the liberal revolution in Russia would strengthen Russia in the war. Still, the known and public acts of Schiff, who had always been hostile to Russian absolutism, had even greater effect than any possible secret assistance to such a revolution.

The February Revolution itself often consciously appealed for support to Jews, an entire nation enslaved. Eye-witness testimonies that Russian Jews were very ecstatic about the February Revolution are rife.

Yet there are counter-witnesses too, such as Gregory Aronson, who formed and led the Soviet of Workers' Deputies of Vitebsk (which later had as a member Y.V. Tarle, a future historian). He wrote that on the very first day, when news of the Revolution reached Vitebsk, the newly formed Security Council met in the city Duma, and immediately afterwards Aronson was invited to a meeting of representatives of the Jewish community (clearly, not

rank and file, but leaders). “Apparently, there was a need to consult with me as a representative of the new dawning era, what to do further…. I felt alienation from these people, from the circle of their interests and from the tense atmosphere, which was at that meeting…. I had a sense that this society belonged mostly to the old world, which was retreating into the past.”[33] “We were not able to eliminate a certain mutual chill that had come from somewhere. The faces of the people I was working with, displayed no uplift or faith. At times, it appeared that these selfless social activists perceived themselves as elements of the old order.”[34]

That is a precise witness account. Such bewilderment, caution and wavering predominated among religiously conservative Jews, one assumes, not only in Vitebsk. The sensible old Jewry, carrying a sense of many centuries of experience of hard ordeals, was apparently shocked by the sudden overthrow of the monarchy and had serious misgivings.

Yet, in the spirit of the 20th century, the dynamic masses of every nation, including Jews, were already secular, not chained to traditions and very eager to build “the happy new world.”

The Jewish Encyclopedia notes “a sharp intensification of the political activity of Jewry, noticeable even against a background of stormy social uplift that gripped Russia after February 1917.”[35]

Myself, having worked for many years on the “February” press and memoirs of the contemporaries of the February, could not fail to noticed this “sharp strengthening,” this gusting. In those materials, from the most varied witnesses and participants of those events, there are so many Jewish names, and the Jewish theme is very loud and persistent. From the memories of Rodzyanko, from the town governor Balk, from General Globachyov and many others, from the first days of the Revolution in the depths of the Tavrichesky Palace, the numbers of Jews jumped out at me — among the members of the commandants office, the interrogation commissions, the pamphlet-merchants and so on. V.D. Nabokov, who was well disposed towards Jews, wrote that on March 2 at the entrance to the Tavrichesky mini-park in front of the Duma building, there was “an unbelievable crush of people and shouting; at the entrance of the gates some young, Jewish-looking men were questioning the bypassers.”[36] According to Balk, the crowd that went on the rampage at the “Astoria” [an elite hotel in St. Petersburg] on the night of February 28, consisted of armed … soldiers, sailors and Jews.[37] I would indulge some emigrant irritability here as they used to say “well, that’s all the Jews”; yet the same was witnessed by another neutral observer, the Methodist pastor Dr. Simons, an American who had already been in Petrograd for ten years and knew it well. He was debriefed by a commission of the American Senate in 1919: “Soon after the March Revolution of 1917, everywhere in Petrograd you could see groups of Jews, standing on benches, soap boxes and such, making speeches…. There had been restrictions on the rights of Jews to live in Petrograd, but after the Revolution they came in droves, and the majority of agitators were Jews … they were apostate Jews.[38]

A certain "Student Hanokh" came to Kronstadt a few days before a planned massacre of sixty officers, who were named on a hit-list; he became the founder and chairman of the Kronstadt's "Committee of the Revolutionary Movement." (The order of the Committee was to arrest and try each and all officers. "Somebody had carefully prepared and disseminated false information," triggering massacres first in Kronstadt, then in Sveaborg; it was "because of the uncertainty of the situation, when every fabrication was taken for a hard fact."[39]) The baton of the bloody Kronstadt affair was carried by the drop-out psychoneurologist "Dr. Roshal." (Later, after the October coup, S.G. Roshal was appointed the Commandant of the Gatchina, and from November he was the commissar of the whole Romanian Front, where he was killed upon arrival.[40])

A certain Solomon and a Kaplun spoke on behalf of the newly-formed revolutionary militia of the Vasilievsky Island (in the future, the latter would become the bloody henchman of Zinoviev).

The Petrograd Bar created a special "Commission for the examination of the justice of imprisoning persons arrested during the time of the Revolution" (thousands were arrested during this time in Petrograd) — that is, to virtually decide their fate without due process (and that of all the former gendarmes and police). This commission was headed by the barrister Goldstein. Yet, the unique story of the petty officer Timofey Kirpichnikov, who triggered the street Revolution, was written in March 1917 and preserved for us by the Jew Jacob Markovich Fishman — a curious historical figure. (I with gratitude relied on this story in The Red Wheel.)

The Jewish Encyclopedia concludes: "Jews for the first time in Russian history had occupied posts in the central and regional administrations."[41]

On the very heights, in the Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, invisibly ruling the country in those months, two leaders distinguished themselves: Nakhamkis-Steklov and Gummer-Sukhanov.On the night of March 1st to March 2nd they dictated to the complacently-blind Provisional Government a program which preemptively destroyed its power for the entire period of its existence.

Reflective contemporary G.A. Landau thus explains the active participation of the Jews in the revolution: "The misfortune of Russia, and the misfortune of the Russian Jewry, is that the results of the first Revolution [1905] were still not processed, not transformed into a new social fabric; no new generation was born, when a great and back-breaking war broke out. And when the hour of disintegration came, it came upon the generation that from the very beginning was a kind of exhausted remnant of the previous revolution; it found the inertia of depleted spirituality, lacking an organic connection to the situation, and chained by spiritual stagnation to the ten-years-ago-bygone period. And so the organic Revolutionism of the beginning of the 20th century [of the First Russian Revolution of 1905] had turned into the mechanical `permanent Revolution´ of the wartime era."[42]

Through many years of detailed studies I have spent much time trying to comprehend the essence of the February Revolution and the Jewish role in it. I came to this conclusion and can now repeat: no, the February Revolution was not something the Jews did to the Russians, but rather it was done by the Russians themselves, which I believe I amply demonstrated in The Red Wheel. We committed this downfall ourselves: our anointed Tsar, the court circles, the hapless high-ranking generals, obtuse administrators, and their enemies — the elite intelligentsia, the Octobrist Party, the Zemstvo, the Kadets, the Revolutionary Democrats, socialists and revolutionaries, and along with them, a bandit element of army reservists, distressingly confined to the Petersburg's barracks. And this is precisely why we perished. True, there were already many Jews among the intelligentsia by that time, yet that is in no way a basis to call it a Jewish revolution.

One may classify revolutions by their main animating forces, and then the February Revolution must be seen as a Russian national Revolution, or more precisely, a Russian ethnic Revolution. Though if one would judge it using the methodology of materialistic sociologists — asking who benefited the most, or benefited most quickly, or the most solidly and in the long term from the Revolution, — then it could be called otherwise, Jewish, for example. But then again why not German? After all, Kaiser Wilhelm initially benefited from it. But the remaining Russian population got nothing but harm and destruction; however, that doesn't make the Revolution "non-Russian." The Jewish society got everything it fought for from the Revolution, and the October Revolution was altogether unnecessary for them, except for a small slice of young cutthroat Jews, who with their Russian internationalist brothers accumulated an explosive charge of hate for the Russian governing class and burst forth to "deepen" the Revolution.

So how, having understood this, was I to move through March 1917 and then April 1917? Describing the Revolution literally hour by hour, I frequently found the many episodes in the sources that had a Jewish theme. Yet would it be right to simply pour all that on the pages of March 1917? Then that easy and piquant temptation — to put all the blame on Jews, on their ideas and actions, to see them as the main reason for these events — would easily skew the book and overcome the readers, and divert the research away from the truly main causes of the Revolution.

And so in order to avoid the self-deception of the Russians, I persistently and purposely downplayed the Jewish theme in The Red Wheel, relative to its actual coverage in the press and on the streets in those days.

The February Revolution was carried out by Russian hands and Russian foolishness. Yet at the same time, its ideology was permeated and dominated by the intransigent hostility to the historical Russian state that ordinary Russians didn't have, but the Jews — had. So the Russian intelligentsia too had adopted this view. (This was discussed in Chapter 11). This intransigent hostility grew especially sharp after the trial of Beilis, and then after the mass expulsion of Jews in 1915. And so this intransigence overcame the moderation.

Yet the Executive Committee of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, which was formed within hours of the Revolution, appears very different. This Executive Committee was in fact a tough shadow government that deprived the liberal Provisional Government of any real power, while at the same time, criminally refused to accept responsibility for its power openly. By its "Order No. 1," the Executive Committee wrested the power from the military and created support for itself in the demoralized garrison of Petrograd. It was precisely this Executive Committee, and not the judiciary, not the timber industrialists, not the bankers, which fast-tracked the country to her doom. In the summer of 1917, Joseph Goldenberg, a member of the Executive Committee explained to the French Diplomat Claude Anet: "The Order No. 1 was not a mistake; it was a necessity…. On the day we executed the Revolution, we realized that if we did not destroy the old army, it would crush the Revolution. We had to choose between the army and the Revolution, and we did not waver: we chose the latter … [and we inflicted,] I dare say, a brilliant blow."[43] So there you have it. The Executive Committee quite purposely destroyed the army in the middle of the war.

Is it legitimate to ask who were those successful and fatal-for-Russia leaders of the Executive Committee? Yes, it is legitimate, when actions of such leaders abruptly change the course of history. And it must be said that the composition of the Executive Committee greatly concerned the public and the newspapers in 1917, during which time many members of the Committee concealed themselves behind pseudonyms from the public eye: who was ruling Russia? No one knew.

Then, as it turned out, there was a dozen of soldiers, who were there just for show and weren't very bright, they were kept out of any real power or decision making. From the other thirty, though, of those who actually wielded power, more than half were Jewish socialists. There were also Russians, Caucasians, Latvians and Poles. Less than a quarter were Russians.

The moderate socialist V.B. Stankevich noted: "What really stuck out in the composition of the Committee was the large foreign element … totally out of proportion to their part of the population in Petrograd or the country in general." Stankevich asks, "Was this the unhealthy scum of Russian society? Or was this the consequence of the sins of the old regime, which by its actions violently pushed the foreign element into the Leftist parties? Or was that simply the result of free competition?" And then, "there remains an open question — who bears more guilt for this — the foreign born, who were there, or the Russians who could have been there but weren't?"[44]

For a socialist that might be a case to look for a guilty party. Yet wouldn't it better for all — for us, for you, for them — to avoid sinking into that mad dirty torrent altogether?

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[6] Birzheviye Vedomosti, March 9, 1917, Page 2

[7] Ibid, March 10, Page 2

[8] AJE, Volume 7, Page 377

[9][9] G.B. Sliozberg, Dela Minuvshikh Dney: Zapiski Russkovo Yevreya: Paris, 1933-1934, Volume 3, Page 360

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Chapter 14: During 1917

In the beginning of April 1917 the Provisional Government had discovered to its surprise that Russian finances, already for some time in quite bad shape, were on the brink of complete collapse. In an attempt to mend the situation, and stir enthusiastic patriotism, the government loudly, announced the issuance of domestic Freedom Loan bonds.

Rumors about the loan had began circulating as early as March and Minister of Finance Tereshchenko informed the press that there were already multi-million pledges from bankers to buy bonds, "mainly from the Jewish bankers, which is undoubtedly related to the abolition of religious and national restrictions."[1] Indeed, as soon as the loan was officially announced, names of large Jewish subscribers began appearing in newspapers, accompanied by prominent front-page appeals: "Jewish citizens! Subscribe to the Freedom Loan!" and "Every Jew must have the Freedom Loan bonds!"[2] In a single subscription drive in a Moscow synagogue 22 million rubles was collected. During the first two days, Jews in Tiflis subscribed to 1.5 million rubles of bonds; Jews in Minsk – to half a million in the first week; the Saratov community – to 800 thousand rubles of bonds. In Kiev, the heirs of Brodsky and Klara Ginzburg each spent one million. The Jews abroad came forward as well: Jacob Schiff, 1 million; Rothschild in London, 1 million; in Paris, on the initiative of Baron Ginzburg, Russian Jews participated actively and subscribed to severalmillion worth of bonds.[3] At the same time, the Jewish Committee in Support for Freedom Loan was established and appealed to public.[4]

However, the government was very disappointed with the overall result of the first month of the subscription. For encouragement, the lists of major subscribers (who purchased bonds on 25 thousand rubles or more) were published several times: in the beginning of May, in the beginning of June and in the end of July. "The rich who did not subscribe"[5] were shamed. What is most striking is not the sheer number of Jewish names on the lists (assimilated Russian-Germans with their precarious situation during the Russo-German War were in the second place among bond-holders) but the near absence of the top Russian bourgeoisie, apart from a handful of prominent Moscow entrepreneurs.

In politics, "left and center parties burgeoned and many Jews had became politically active."[6] From the very first days after the February Revolution, central newspapers published an enormous number of announcements about private meetings, assemblies and sessions of various Jewish parties, initially mostly the Bund, but later Poale Zion, Zionists, Socialist Zionists, Territorialist Zionists, and the Socialist Jewish Workers' Party (SJWP). By March 7 we already read about an oncoming assembly of the All-Russian Jewish Congress – finally, the pre-revolutionary idea of Dubnov had become widely accepted. However, "because of sharp differences between Zionists and Bundists," the Congress did not materialize in 1917 (nor did it occur in 1918 either "because of the Civil War and antagonism of Bolshevik authorities").[7] "In Petrograd, Jewish People's Group was re-established with

M. Vinaver at the helm."[8] They were liberals, not socialists; initially, they hoped to establish an alliance with Jewish socialists. Vinaver declared: "we applaud the Bund – the vanguard of the revolutionary movement."[9] Yet the socialists stubbornly rejected all gestures of rapprochement.

The rallying of Jewish parties in Petrograd had indirectly indicated that by the time of revolution the Jewish population there was already substantial and energetic. Surprisingly, despite the fact that almost no "Jewish proletariat" existed in Petrograd, the Bund was very successful there. It was extraordinarily active in Petrograd, arranging a number of meetings of local organization (in the lawyer's club and then on April 1 in the Tenishev's school); there was a meeting with a concert in the Mikhailovsky Theatre; then on April 14-19 "the All-Russian Conference of the Bund took place, at which a demand to establish a national and cultural Jewish autonomy in Russia was brought forward again."[10] ("After conclusion of speeches, all the conference participants had sung the Bund's anthem Oath, The Internationale, and La Marseillaise."[11]) And, as in past, Bund had to balance its national and revolutionary platforms: in 1903 it struggled for the independence from the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party, and yet in 1905 it rushed headlong into the All-Russian revolution. Likewise, now, in 1917, the Bund's representatives occupied prominent positions in the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies [a Soviet is the Russian term used for an elected (at least in theory) council] and later among the Social Democrats of Kiev. "By the end of 1917 the Bund had nearly 400 sections countrywide, totaling around 40,000 members."[12]

Developments in Poale Zion were no less amazing. In the beginning of April they also held their All-Russian Conference in Moscow. Among its resolutions we see on the one hand a motion to organize the All-Russian Jewish Congress and discuss the problem of emigration to Palestine. On the other hand, the Poale Zion Conference in Odessa had simultaneously announced the party's uncompromising program of class warfare: "Through the efforts of Jewish revolutionary democracy the power over destinies of the Jewish nation was … wrested from the dirty grasp of 'wealthy and settled' Jews despite all the resistance of bourgeoisie to the right and the Bund to the left…. Do not allow the bourgeois parties to bring in the garbage of the old order…. Do not let the hypocrites speak – they did not fight but sweated out the rights for our people on their bended knees in the offices of anti-Semitic ministers; … they did not believe in the revolutionary action of the masses." Then, in April 1917, when the party had split the "Radical Socialist" Poale Zion moved toward the Zionists, breaking away from the main "Social Democratic" Poale Zion,[13] which later would join the Third International.[14]

Like the two above-mentioned parties, the SJWP also held its statewide conference at which it had merged with the Socialist Zionists, forming the United Jewish Socialist Workers' Party (Fareynikte) and parting with the idea "of any extraterritorial Jewish nation" with its own parliament and national autonomy. "Fareynikte appealed to the Provisional Government

asking it to declare equality of languages and to establish a council on the affairs of nationalities" which would specifically "fund Jewish schools and public agencies." At the same time, Fareynikte closely collaborated with the Socialist Revolutionaries.[15]

However, it was Zionism that became the most influential political force in the Jewish milieu.[16] As early as the beginning of March, the resolution of Petrograd's Zionist Assembly contained the following wording: "The Russian Jewry is called upon to support the Provisional Government in every possible way, to enthusiastic work, to national consolidation and organization for the sake of the prosperity of Jewish national life in Russia and the national and political renaissance of Jewish nation in Palestine." And what an inspiring historical moment it was – March 1917 – with the British troops closing on Jerusalem right at that time! Already on March 19 the proclamation of Odessa's Zionists stated: "today is the time when states rearrange themselves on national foundations. Woe to us if we miss this historic opportunity." In April, the Zionist movement was strongly reinforced by the public announcement of Jacob Schiff, who had decided to join Zionists "because of fear of Jewish assimilation as a result of Jewish civil equality in Russia. He believes that Palestine could become the center to spread ideals of Jewish culture all over the world."[17] In the beginning of May, Zionists held a large meeting in the building of Petrograd Stock Exchange, with Zionist hymns performed several times. In the end of May the All-Russian Zionist Conference was held in the Petrograd Conservatory. It outlined major Zionist objectives: cultural revival of the Jewish nation, "social revolution in the economic structure of Jewish society to transform the 'nation of merchants and artisans into the nation of farmers and workers,' an increase in emigration to Palestine and 'mobilization of Jewish capital to finance the Jewish settlers'." Both Jabotinsky's plan on creation of a Jewish legion in the British Army and the I. Trumpeldorf's plan for the "formation of a Jewish army in Russia which would cross the Caucasus and liberate Eretz Yisrael [The land of Israel] from Turkish occupation have been discussed and rejected on the basis of the neutrality of Zionists in the World War I."[18]

The Zionist Conference decreed to vote during the oncoming local elections for the parties "not farther to the right than the People's Socialists," and even to refuse to support Constitutional Democrats like D. Pasmanik, who later complained: "It was absolutely meaningless – it looked like the entire Russian Jewry, with its petty and large bourgeoisie, are socialists."[19] His bewilderment was not unfounded.

The congress of student Zionist organization, Gekhover, with delegates from 25 cities and all Russian universities, had taken place in the beginning of April in Petrograd. Their resolution stated that the Jews were suffering not for the sake of equality in Russia but for the rebirth of Jewish nation in the native Palestine. They decided to form legions in Russia to conquer Palestine. Overall, "during the summer and fall of 1917 Zionism in Russia continued to gain strength: by September its members numbered 300,000."[20]

It is less known that in 1917 Jewish "orthodox movements enjoyed substantial popularity second only to the Zionists and ahead of the socialist parties" (as illustrated by their success "during elections of the leadership of reorganized Jewish communities").[21]

There were rallies ("The Jews are together with the democratic Russia in both love and hatred!"), public lectures ("The Jewish Question and the Russian Revolution"), city-wide "assemblies of Jewish high school students" in Petrograd and other cities (aside from general student meetings). In Petrograd, the Central Organ of Jewish Students was established, though not recognized by the Bund and other leftist parties. While many provincial committees for the assistance to the "victims of the war" (i.e., to Jewish refugees and deportees) ceased to exist because at this time "democratic forces needed to engage in broader social activities," and so the Central Jewish Committee for providing such aid was formed by April. In May the Jewish People's Union was established to facilitate consolidation of all Jewish forces, to prepare for the convocation of the All-Russian Jewish Union and to get ready for the oncoming elections to the Constituent Assembly. In the end of May there was another attempt of unification: the steering committee of the Jewish Democratic Alliance convened the conference of all Jewish democratic organizations in Russia. Meanwhile, lively public discussion went on regarding convocation of the All-Russian Jewish Congress: the Bund rejected it as inconsistent with their plans; the Zionists demanded the Congress include on their agenda the question of Palestine – and were themselves rejected by the rest; in July the All-Russian Conference on the Jewish Congress preparation took place in Petrograd.[22] Because of social enthusiasm, Vinaver was able to declare there that the idea of united Jewish nation, dispersed among different countries, is ripe, and that from now on the Russian Jews may not be indifferent to the situation of Jews in other countries, such as Romania or Poland. The Congress date was set for December.

What an upsurge of Jewish national energy it was! Even amid the upheavals of 1917, Jewish social and political activities stood out in their diversity, vigor and organization.

The "period between February and November 1917 was the time of blossoming" of Jewish culture and healthcare. In addition to the Petrograd publication The Jews of Russia, the publisher of The Jewish Week had moved to Petrograd; publication of the Petrograd-Torgblat in Yiddish had begun; similar publications were started in other cities. The Tarbut and Culture League [a network of secular, Hebrew-language schools] had established "dozens of kindergartens, secondary and high schools and pedagogic colleges" teaching both in Yiddish and in Hebrew. A Jewish grammar school was founded in Kiev. In April, the first All-Russian Congress on Jewish Culture and Education was held in Moscow. It requested state funding for Jewish schools A conference of the Society of Admirers of Jewish Language and Culture took place. The Habima Theatre, "the first professional theatre in Hebrew in the world,"[23] opened in Moscow. There were an exposition of Jewish artists and a conference of the Society on Jewish Health Care in April in Moscow.

These Jewish activities are all the more amazing given the state of general governmental, administrative and cultural confusion in Russia 1917.

A major event in the Jewish life of the time was the granting of official permission for Jewish youth to enlist as officers in the Russian Army. It was a large-scale move: in April, the headquarters of the Petrograd military district had issued an order to the commanders of Guards military units to immediately post all Jewish students to the training battalion at Nizhny Novgorod with the purpose of their further assignment to military academies[24] – that is virtually mass-scale promotion of young Jews into the officer ranks. "Already in the beginning of June 1917, 131 Jews graduated from the accelerated military courses at the Konstantinovsky military academy in Kiev as officers; in the summer 1917 Odessa, 160 Jewish cadets were promoted into officers."[25] In June 2600 Jews were promoted to warrant-officer rank all over Russia.

There is evidence that in some military academies Junkers [used in Tsarist Russia for cadets and young officers] met Jewish newcomers unkindly, as it was in the Alexandrovsky military academy after more than 300 Jews had been posted to it. In the Mikhailovsky military academy a group of Junkers proposed a resolution that: "Although we are not against the Jews in general, we consider it inconceivable to let them into the command ranks of the Russian Army." The officers of the academy dissociated themselves from this statement and a group of socialist Junkers (141-strong) had expressed their disapproval, "finding anti-Jewish protests shameful for the revolutionary army,"[26] and the resolution did not pass. When Jewish warrant officers arrived to their regiments, they often encountered mistrust and enmity on the part of soldiers for whom having Jews as officers was extremely unusual and strange. (Yet the newly-minted officers who adopted new revolutionary style of behavior gained popularity lightning-fast.)

On the other hand, the way Jewish Junkers from the military academy in Odessa behaved was simply striking. In the end of March, 240 Jews had been accepted into the academy. Barely three weeks later, on April 18 old style, there was a First of May parade in Odessa and the Jewish Junkers marched ostentatiously singing ancient Jewish songs. Did they not understand that Russian soldiers would hardly follow such officers? What kind of officers were they going to become? It would be fine if they were being prepared for the separate Jewish battalions. Yet according to General Denikin, the year 1917 saw successful formation of all kinds of national regiments – Polish, Ukrainian, Transcaucasian (the Latvian units were already in place for a while) – except the Jewish ones: it was "the only nationality not demanding national self-determination in military. And every time, when in response to complaints about bad acceptance of Jewish officers in army formation of separate Jewish regiments was suggested, such a proposal was met with a storm of indignation on the part of Jews and the Left and with accusations of a spiteful provocation."[27] (Newspapers had reported that Germans also planned to form separate Jewish regiments but the project was dismissed.) It appears, though, that new Jewish officers still wanted some national

organization in the military. In Odessa on August 18, the convention of Jewish officers decided to establish a section which would be responsible for connections between different fronts "to report on the situation of Jewish officers in the field." In August, "unions of Jewish warriors appeared; by October such unions were present at all fronts and in many garrisons. During the October 10-15, 1917 conference in Kiev, the All-Russian Union of Jewish Warriors was founded."[28] (Although it was a new 'revolutionary army', some reporters still harbored hostility toward officer corps in general and to officer's epaulettes in particular; for instance, A. Alperovich whipped up emotions against officers in general in Birzhevye Vedomosti [Stock Exchange News] as late as May 5.)[29]

Various sources indicate that Jews were not eager to be drafted as common soldiers even in 1917; apparently, there were instances when to avoid the draft sick individuals passed off as genuine conscripts at the medical examining boards, and, as a result, some district draft commissions began demanding photo-IDs from Jewish conscripts (an unusual practice in those simple times). It immediately triggered angry protests that such a requirement goes against the repulsion of national restrictions, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs forbade asking for such IDs.

In the beginning of April the Provisional Government issued an order by telegraph to free without individual investigation all Jews previously exiled as suspects of espionage. Some of them resided in the now-occupied territories, while others could safely return home, and yet many deportees asked for permission to reside in the cities of the European part of Russia. There was a flow of Jews into Petrograd (Jewish population of 50,000 in 1917)[30] and a sharp increase of Jewish population in Moscow (60,000).[31]

Russian Jews received less numerous, but highly energetic reinforcement from abroad. Take those two famous trains that crossed hostile Germany without hindrance and brought to Russia nearly 200 prominent individuals, 30 in Lenin's and 160 in Natanson-Martov's train, with Jews comprising an absolute majority (the lists of passengers of the 'exterritorial trains' were for the first time published by V. Burtsev).[32] They represented almost all Jewish parties, and virtually all of them would play a substantial role in the future events in Russia.

Hundreds of Jews returned from the United States: former emigrants, revolutionaries, and draft escapees – now they all were the 'revolutionary fighters' and 'victims of Tsarism'. By order of Kerensky, the Russian embassy in the USA issued Russian passports to anyone who could provide just two witnesses (to testify to identity) literally from the street. (The situation around Trotsky's group was peculiar. They were apprehended in Canada on suspicion of connections with Germany. The investigation found that Trotsky travelled not with flimsy Russian papers, but with a solid American passport, inexplicably granted to him despite his short stay in the USA, and with a substantial sum of money, the source of which remained a mystery.[33]) On June 26 at the exalted "Russian rally in New York City" (directed by P. Rutenberg, one-time friend and then a murderer of Gapon), Abraham Kagan, the editor of Jewish newspaper Forwards, addressed Russian ambassador Bakhmetev "on behalf of two

million Russian Jews residing in the United States of America": "We have always loved our motherland; we have always sensed the links of brotherhood with the entire Russian nation…. Our hearts are loyal to the red banner of the Russian liberation and to the national tricolor of the free Russia." He had also claimed that the self-sacrifice of the members of Narodnaya Volya [literally, The People's Will, a terrorist leftwing revolutionary group in Tsarist Russia, best known for its assassination of Tsar Alexander II, known as 'the Tsar Liberator for ending serfdom] "was directly connected to the fact of increased persecution of the Jews" and that "people like Zundelevich, Deich, Gershuni, Liber and Abramovich were among the bravest."[34]

And so they had begun coming back, and not just from New York, judging by the official introduction of discounted railroad fare for 'political emigrants' travelling from Vladivostok. At the late July rally in Whitechapel, London, "it was found that in London alone 10,000 Jews declared their willingness to return to Russia"; the final resolution had expressed pleasure that "Jews would go back to struggle for the new social and democratic Russia."[35]

Destinies of many returnees, hurrying to participate in the revolution and jumping headlong into the thick of things, were outstanding. Among the returnees were the famous V. Volodarsky, M. Uritsky, and Yu. Larin, the latter was the author of the 'War Communism economy' program. It is less known that Yakov Sverdlov's brother, Veniamin, was also among the returnees. Still, he would not manage to rise higher than the deputy Narkom [People's Commissar] of Communications and a member of Board of the Supreme Soviet of the National Economy. Moisei Kharitonov, Lenin's associate in emigration who returned to Russia in the same train with him, quickly gained notoriety by assisting the anarchists in their famous robbery in April; later he was the secretary of Perm, Saratov and Sverdlov gubkoms [guberniya's Party committee], and the secretary of Urals Bureau of the Central Committee. Semyon Dimanshtein, a member of a Bolshevik group in Paris, would become the head of the Jewish Commissariat at the People's Commissariat of Nationalities, and later the head of YevSek [Jewish Section] at the All-Russian Central Executive Committee; he would in fact supervise the entire Jewish life. Amazingly, at the age of 18 he managed "to pass qualification test to become a rabbi" and became a member of the Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party – all this in course of one year.[36] Similarly, members of the Trotsky's group had also fared well: the jeweler G. Melnichansky, the accountant Friman, the typographer A. Minkin-Menson, and the decorator Gomberg-Zorin had respectively headed Soviet trade unions, Pravda, the dispatch office of bank notes and securities, and the Petrograd Revolutionary Tribunal.

Names of other returnees after the February Revolution are now completely forgotten, yet wrongly so, as they played important roles in the revolutionary events. For example, the Doctor of Biology Ivan Zalkind had actively participated in the October coup and then in fact ran Trotsky's People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs. Semyon Kogan-Semkov became the "political commissar of Izhevsk weapons and steel factories" in November 1918; that is he

was in charge of the vindictive actions during suppression of major uprising of Izhevsk workers[37] known for its large, in many thousands, victim's toll; in a single incident on the Sobornaya Square in Izhevsk 400 workers were gunned down.[38] Tobinson-Krasnoshchekov later headed the entire Far East as the secretary of the Far East Bureau and the head of local government. Girshfeld-Stashevsky under the pseudonym "Verkhovsky" was in command of a squad of German POWs and turncoats, that is, he laid foundation for the Bolshevik international squads; in 1920 he was the head of clandestine intelligence at the Western front; later, in peacetime, "he, on orders of Cheka Presidium, had organized intelligence network in the Western Europe"; he was awarded the title of "Honorary Chekist."[39]

Among returnees were many who did not share Bolshevik views (at least at the time of arrival) but they were nevertheless welcomed into the ranks of Lenin's and Trotsky's party. For instance, although Yakov Fishman, a member of the Military Revolutionary Committee of the October coup, had deviated from the Bolshevik mainstream by participating in the Left Socialist Revolutionary insurrection in July 1918, he was later accepted into the Russian Communist party of Bolsheviks (RCPB) and entrusted with a post in the Military Intelligence Administration of the Red Army. Or take Yefim Yarchuk, who had returned as an Anarchist Syndicalist, but was delegated by the Petrograd Soviet to reinforce the Kronstadt Soviet; during the October coup he had brought a squad of sailors to Petrograd to storm the Winter Palace. The returnee Vsevolod Volin-Eikhenbaum (the brother of the literary scholar) was a consistent supporter of anarchism and the ideologist of Makhno [a Ukrainian separatist-anarchist] movement; he was the head of the Revolutionary Military Soviet in the Makhno army. We know that Makno was more of an advantage than a detriment to Bolsheviks and as a result Volin was later merely forced to emigrate together with a dozen of other anarchists.[40]

The expectations of returnees were not unfounded: those were the months marked by a notable rise to prominence for many Jews in Russia. "The Jewish Question exists no longer in Russia."[41] (Still, in the newspaper essay by D. Aizman, Sura Alperovich, the wife of a merchant who moved from Minsk to Petrograd, had expressed her doubts: "So there is no more slavery and that's it?" So what about the things "that 'Nicholas of yesterday' did to us in Kishinev [in regard to the Kishinev pogrom]?" [42]) In another article David Aizman thus elaborated his thought: "Jews must secure the gains of revolution by any means … without any qualms. Any necessary sacrifice must be made. Everything is on the stake here and all will be lost if we hesitate…. Even the most backward parts of Jewish mass understand this." "No one questions what would happen to Jews if the counter-revolution prevails." He was absolutely confident that if that happens there would be mass executions of Jews. Therefore, "the filthy scum must be crushed even before it had any chance to develop, in embryo. Their very seed must be destroyed…. Jews will be able to defend their freedom."[43]

Crushed in embryo…. And even their very seed…. It was already pretty much the Bolshevik program, though expressed in the words of Old Testament. Yet whose seed must be

destroyed? Monarchists'? But they were already breathless; all their activists could be counted on fingers. So it could only be those who had taken a stand against the unbridled, running wild soviets, against all kinds of committees and mad crowds; those, who wished to halt the breakdown of life in the country – prudent ordinary people, former government officials, and first of all officers and very soon the soldier-general Kornilov. There were Jews among those counter-revolutionaries, but overall that movement was the Russian national one.

What about press? In 1917, the influence of print media grew; the number of periodicals and associated journalists and staff was rising. Before the revolution, only a limited number of media workers qualified for draft deferral, and only those who were associated with newspapers and printing offices which were established in the pre-war years. (They were classified as 'defense enterprises' despite their desperate fight against governmental and military censorship.) But now, from April, on the insistence of the publishers, press privileges were expanded with respect to the number of workers exempt from military service; newly founded political newspapers were henceforth also covered by the exemption (sometimes fraudulently as the only thing needed to qualify was maintaining a circulation of 30,000 for at least two weeks). Draft privileges were introduced on the basis of youth, for the 'political emigrants' and those 'released from exile' – everything that favored employment of new arrivals in the leftist newspapers. At the same time, rightist newspapers were being closed: Malenkaya Gazeta [Small Newspaper] and Narodnaya Gazeta [People's Newspaper] were shut down for accusing Bolsheviks of having links with Germans. When many newspapers published the telegrams fraudulently attributed to the Empress and the fake was exposed (it was "an innocent joke of a telegraph operator lady," for which, of course, she was never disciplined) and so they had to retract their pieces, Birzhevye Vedomosti, for instance, had produced such texts: "It turned out that neither the special archive at the Main Department of Post and Telegraph, where the royal telegrams were stored, nor the head office of telegraph contain any evidence of this correspondence."[44] See, they presented it as if the telegrams were real but all traces of their existence had been skillfully erased. What a brave free press!

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As early as in the beginning of March the prudent Vinaver had warned the Jewish public: "Apart from love for freedom, self-control is needed…. It is better for us to avoid highly visible and prominent posts…. Do not hurry to practice our rights."[45] We know that Vinaver (and also Dan, Liber and Branson) "at different times have been offered minister posts, but all of them refused, believing that Jews should not be present in Russian Government." The attorney Vinaver could not, of course, reject his sensational appointment to the Senate, where he became one of four Jewish Senators (together with G. Blumenfeld, O. Gruzenberg, and I. Gurevich).[46] There were no Jews among the ministers but four influential Jews occupied posts of deputy ministers: V. Gurevich was a deputy to Avksentiev,

the Minister of Internal Affairs; S. Lurie was in the Ministry of Trade and Industry; S. Schwartz and A. Ginzburg-Naumov – in the ministry of Labor; and P. Rutenberg should be mentioned here too. From July, A. Galpern became the chief of the administration of the Provisional Government (after V. Nabokov)[47]; the director of 1st Department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was A. N. Mandelshtam. The assistant to the head of the Moscow military district was Second Lieutenant Sher (since July 1917); from May, the head of foreign supply department at General Staff was A. Mikhelson; the commissar of the Provisional Government in the field construction office was Naum Glazberg; several Jews were incorporated by Chernov into the Central Land Committee responsible for everything related to allotting land to peasants. Of course, most of those were not key posts, having negligibly small influence when compared to the principal role of the Executive Committee, whose ethnic composition would soon become a hotly debated public worry.

At the August Government Conference dedicated to the disturbing situation in the country, apart from the representatives of soviets, parties, and guilds, a separate representation was granted to the ethnic groups of Russia, with Jews represented by eight delegates, including G. Sliozberg, M. Liber, N. Fridman, G. Landau, and O. Gruzenberg.

The favorite slogan of 1917 was "Expand the Revolution!" All socialist parties worked to implement it. I. O. Levin writes: "There is no doubt that Jewish representation in the Bolshevik and other parties which facilitated "expanding of revolution" – Mensheviks, Socialist Revolutionaries, etc. – with respect to both general Jewish membership and Jewish presence among the leaders, greatly exceeds the Jewish share in the population of Russia. This is an indisputable fact; while its reasons should be debated, its factual veracity is unchallengeable and its denial is pointless"; and "a certainly convincing explanation of this phenomenon by Jewish inequality before the March revolution … is still not sufficiently exhaustive."[48] Members of central committees of the socialist parties are known. Interestingly, Jewish representation in the leadership of Mensheviks, the Right and the Left Socialist Revolutionaries, and the Anarchists was much greater than among the Bolshevik leaders. At the Socialist Revolutionary Congress, which took place in the end of May and beginning of June 1917, 39 out of 318 delegates were Jewish, and out of 20 members of the Central Committee of the party elected during the Congress, 7 were Jewish. A. Gotz was one of the leaders of the right wing faction and M. Natanson was among the leaders of the left Socialist Revolutionaries."[49] (What a despicable role awaited Natanson, "the wise Mark," one of the founder of Russian Narodnichestvo ["Populism"]! During the war, living abroad, he was receiving financial aid from Germany. In May 1917 he returned in Russia in one of the 'extraterritorial trains' across Germany; in Russia, he had immediately endorsed Lenin and threw his weight in support of the latter's goal of dissolving the Constituent Assembly; actually, it was he who had voiced this idea first, though Lenin, of course, needed no such nudge.)

Local government elections took place in the summer. Overall, socialist parties were victorious, and "Jews actively participated in the local and municipal work in a number of cities and towns outside of the [former] Pale of Settlement." For instance, Socialist Revolutionary O. Minor .became head of the Moscow City Duma; member of the Central Committee of the Bund, A. Vainshtein (Rakhmiel),of the Minsk Duma; Menshevik I. Polonsky, of the Ekaterinoslav Duma, Bundist D. Chertkov, of the Saratov Duma." G. Shreider had become the mayor of Petrograd, and A. Ginzburg-Naumov was elected a deputy mayor in Kiev."[50]

But most of these persons were gone with the October coup and it was not they who shaped the subsequent developments in Russia. It would become the lot of those who now occupied much lower posts, mostly in the soviets; they were numerous and spread all over the country: take, for instance, Khinchuk, head of the Moscow Soviet of Workers' Deputies, or Nasimovich and M. Trilisser of the Irkutsk Soviet (the latter would later serve in the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Siberia and become a famous Chekist).[51]

All over the provinces "Jewish socialist parties enjoyed large representation in the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies."[52] They were also prominently presented at the All-Russian Democratic Conference in September 1917, which annoyed Lenin so much that he had even demanded surrounding the Alexandrinsky Theater with troops and arresting the entire assembly. (The theater's superintendent, comrade Nashatyr, would have to act on the order, but Trotsky had dissuaded Lenin.) And even after the October coup, the Moscow Soviet of Soldiers' Deputies had among its members, according to Bukharin, "dentists, pharmacists, etc., – representatives of trades as close to the soldier's profession as to that of the Chinese Emperor."[53]

But above all of that, above all of Russia, from the spring to the autumn of 1917, stood the power of one body – and it was not the Provisional Government. It was the powerful and insular Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet, and later, after June, the successor to its power, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee (CEC) – it was they who had in fact ruled over Russia. While appearing solid and determined from outside, in reality they were being torn apart by internal contradictions and inter-factional ideological confusion. Initially, the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies unanimously approved the Order No. 1, but later was doubtful about the war – whether to continue destroying army or to strengthen it. (Quite unexpectedly, they declared their support for the Freedom Loan; thus they had incensed the Bolsheviks but agreed with the public opinion on this issue, including the attitudes of liberal Jews.)

The Presidium of the first All-Russian CEC of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies (the first governing Soviet body) consisted of nine men. Among them were the Social Revolutionaries (SRs) A. Gots and M. Gendelman, the Menshevik, F. Dan, and the member of Bund, M. Liber. (In March at the All-Russian Conference of the Soviets, Gendelman and Steklov had demanded stricter conditions be imposed on the Tsar's family, which was under

house arrest, and also insisted on the arrest of all crown princes – this is how confident they were in their power.) The prominent Bolshevik, L. Kamenev, was among the members of that Presidium. It also included the Georgian, Chkheidze; the Armenian, Saakjan; one Krushinsky, most likely a Pole; and Nikolsky, likely a Russian – quite an impudent [ethnic] composition for the governing organ of Russia in such a critical time.

Apart from the CEC of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, there was also the All-Russian Executive Committee of the Soviet of Peasants' Deputies, elected in the end of May. Of its 30 members, there were only three actual peasants – an already habitual sham of the pre-Bolshevik regime. Of those thirty, D. Pasmanik identified seven Jews: "a sad thing it was, especially considering Jewish interests"; and "they had become an eyesore to everybody."[54] Then this peasant organ put forward a list of its candidates for the future Constituent Assembly. Apart from Kerensky, the list contained several Jews, such as the boisterous Ilya Rubanovich, who had just arrived from Paris, the terrorist Abram Gots, and the little-known Gurevich…[55] (In the same article, there was a report on the arrest for desertion of warrant officer M. Golman, the head of the Mogilev Guberniya, a Peasant Soviet.[56])

Of course, the actions of the executive committees could not be solely explained by their ethnic composition – not at all! (Many of those personalities irreversibly distanced themselves from their native communities and had even forgotten the way to their shtetls.) All of them sincerely believed that because of their talents and revolutionary spirit, they would have no problem arranging workers', soldiers' and peasants' matters in the best way possible. They would manage it better simply because of being more educated and smarter than all this clumsy hoi polloi.

Yet for many Russians, from commoner toa general, this sudden, eye-striking transformation in the appearance among the directors and orators at rallies and meetings, in command and in government, was overwhelming.

V. Stankevich, the only officer-socialist in the Executive Committee, provided an example: "this fact [of the abundance of Jews in the Committee] alone had enormous influence on the public opinion and sympathies…. Noteworthy, when Kornilov met with the Committee for the first time, he had accidently sat in the midst of Jews; in front of him sat two insignificant and plain members of the Committee, whom I remember merely because of their grotesquely Jewish facial features. Who knows how that affected Kornilov's attitudes toward Russian revolution?"[57]

Yet the treatment of all things Russian by the new regime was very tale-telling. Here is an example from the "days of Kornilov" in the end of August 1918. Russia was visibly dying, losing the war, with its army corrupted and the rear in collapse. General Kornilov, cunningly deceived by Kerensky, artlessly appealed to the people, almost howling with pain: "Russian people! Our great Motherland is dying. The hour of her death is nigh…. All, whose bosoms

harbor a beating Russian heart, go to the temples and pray to God to grant us the greatest miracle of salvation for our beloved country!"[58] In response to that the ideologist of the February Revolution and one of the leading members of the Executive Committee, Gimmer-Sukhanov, chuckled in amusement: "What an awkward, silly, clueless, politically illiterate call … what a lowbrow imitation of Suzdalshchina ['Suzdalshchina' refers to resistance in Suzdal to the Mongol invaders]!"[59]

Yes, it sounded pompously and awkwardly, without a clear political position. Indeed, Kornilov was not a politician but his heart ached. And what about Sukhanov's heart – did he feel any pain at all? He did not have any sense of the living land and culture, nor he had any urge to preserve them – he served to his ideology only, the International, seeing in Kornilov's words a total lack of ideological content. Yes, his response was caustic. But note that he had not only labeled Kornilov's appeal an 'imitation', he had also derogatorily referred to 'Suzdalshchina,' to Russian history, ancient art and sanctity. And with such disdain to the entire Russian historical heritage, all that internationalist ilk – Sukhanov and his henchmen from the malicious Executive Committee, steered the February Revolution.

And it was not the ethnic origin of Sukhanov and the rest; it was their anti-national, anti-Russian and anti-conservative attitudes. We have seen similar attitudes on the part of the Provisional Government too, with its task of governing the entire Russia and its quite Russian ethnic composition. Yet did it display a Russian worldview or represent Russian interests if only a little? Not at all! The Government's most consistent and 'patriotic' activity was to guide the already unraveling country (the 'Kronstadt Republic' was not the only place which had "seceded from Russia" by that time) to the victory in war! To the victory at any cost! With loyalty to the allies! (Sure, the allies, their governments, public and financers, put pressure on Russia. For instance, in May, Russian newspapers cited The Morning Post from Washington: "America made it clear to the Russian government" that if [Russia] makes a separate peace [with Germany], the United States would "annul all financial agreements with Russia." [60] Prince Lvov [Prince Georgi Lvov, led the Russian Provisional Government during the Russian revolution's initial phase, from March 1917 until he relinquished control to Alexander Kerensky in July 1917] upheld the sentiment: "The country must determinately send its army to battle."[61]) They had no concern about consequences of the ongoing war for Russia. And this mismatch, this loss of sense of national self-preservation, could be observed almost at every meeting of the Provisional Government cabinet, almost in every discussion.

There were simply ridiculous incidents. Throwing millions of rubles left and right and always keenly supporting "cultural needs of ethnic minorities," the Provisional Government at its April 6 meeting had rejected the request of the long-established "Great Russian Orchestra of V. V. Andreev" to continue getting paid as before, "from the funds of the former His Majesty's Personal Chancellery" (the funds were confiscated by the Provisional Government itself). The petition was turned down despite the fact that the requested sum, 30 thousand

rubles per year, was equivalent to the annual pay of just three minister assistants. “Deny!” (Why not disband your so-called “Great Russian” orchestra? – What kind of name is that?) Taken aback and believing that it was just a misunderstanding, Andreev petitioned again. Yet with an unusual for this torpid government determination, he was refused a second time too, at the April 27 meeting.[62]

Milyukov, a Russian historian and minister of the Provisional Government, did not utter a single specifically Russian sentiment during that year. Similarly, “the key figure of the revolution,” Alexander Kerensky, could not be at any stage accused of possessing an ethnic Russian consciousness. Yet at the same time the government demonstrated constant anxious bias against any conservative circles, and especially – against Russian conservatives. Even during his last speech in the Council of the Russian Republic (Pre-Parliament) on October 24, when Trotsky’s troops were already seizing Petrograd building after building, Kerensky emphatically argued that the Bolshevik newspaper Rabochy Put (Worker’s Way) and the right-wing Novaya Rus (New Russia) – both of which Kerensky had just shut down – shared similar political views….

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The “darned incognito” of the members of the Executive Committee was, of course, noticed by the public. Initially it was the educated society of Petrograd that was obsessed with this question, which several times surfaced in newspapers. For two months, the Committee tried to keep the secret, but by May they had no other choice but reveal themselves and had published the actual names of most of the pseudonym-holders (except for Steklov-Nakhamkis and Boris Osipovich Bogdanov, the energetic permanent chair of the council; they had managed to keep their identities secret for a while; the latter’s name confused the public by similarity with another personality, Bogdanov-Malinovsky). This odd secrecy irritated the public, and even ordinary citizens began asking questions. It was already typical in May that if, during a plenary meeting of the Soviet, someone proposed Zinoviev or Kamenev for something, the public shouted from the auditorium demanding their true names.

Concealing true names was incomprehensible to the ordinary man of that time: only thieves hide and change their names. Why is Boris Katz ashamed of his name, and instead calling himself “Kamkov”? Why does Lurie hide under the alias of “Larin”? Why does Mandelshtam use the pseudonym “Lyadov”? Many of these had aliases that originated out of necessity in their past underground life , but what had compelled the likes of Shotman, the Socialist Revolutionary from Tomsk, (and not him alone) to become “Danilov” in 1917?

Certainly, the goal of a revolutionary, hiding behind a pseudonym, is to outsmart someone, and that may include not only the police and government. In this way, ordinary people as well are unable to figure out who their new leaders are.

Intoxicated by the freedom of the first months of the February Revolution, many Jewish activists and orators failed to notice that their constant fussing around presidiums and rallies produced certain bewilderment and wry glances. By the time of the February Revolution there was no "popular anti-Semitism" in the internal regions of Russia, it was confined exclusively to the areas of the Pale of Settlement. (For instance, Abraham Cogan had even stated in 1917: "We loved Russia despite all the oppression from the previous regime because we knew that it was not the Russian people" behind it but Tsarism.[63]) But after just a few months following the February Revolution, resentment against Jews had suddenly flared up among the masses of people and spread over Russia, growing stronger with each passing month. And even the official newspapers reported, for instance, on the exasperation in the waiting lines in the cities. "Everything has been changed in that twinkle of the eye that created a chasm between the old and the new Russia. But it is queues that have changed the most. Strangely, while everything has moved to the left, the food lines have moved to the right. If you … would like to hear Black Hundred propaganda … then go and spend some time in a waiting line." Among other things you will find out that "there are virtually no Jews in the lines, they don't need it as they have enough bread hoarded." The same "gossip about Jews who tuck away bread" rolls from another end of the line as well; "the waiting lines is the most dangerous source of counterrevolution."[64] The author Ivan Nazhivin noted that in the autumn in Moscow anti-Semitic propaganda fell on ready ears in the hungry revolutionary queues: "What rascals! … They wormed themselves onto the very top! … See, how proudly they ride in their cars…. Sure, not a single Yid can be found in the lines here…. Just you wait!"[65]

Any revolution releases a flood of obscenity, envy, and anger from the people. The same happened among the Russian people, with their weakened Christian spirituality. And so the Jews – many of whom had ascended to the top, to visibility, and, what is more, who had not concealed their revolutionary jubilation, nor waited in the miserable lines – increasingly became a target of popular resentment.

Many instances of such resentment were documented in 1917 newspapers. Below are several examples. When, at the Apraksin market on Sennaya Square, a hoard of goods was discovered in possession of Jewish merchants, "people began shout … 'plunder Jewish shops!', because 'Yids are responsible for all the troubles' … and this word 'Yid' is on everyone's lips."[66] A stockpile of flour and bacon was found in the store of a merchant (likely a Jew) in Poltava. The crowd started plundering his shop and then began calling for a Jewish pogrom. Later, several members of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies, including Drobnis, arrived and attempted to appease the crowd; as a result, Drobnis was beaten.[67] In October in Ekaterinoslav soldiers trashed small shops, shouting "Smash the bourgeois! Smash the Yids!" In Kiev at the Vladimirsky market a boy had hit a woman, who tried to buy flour out her turn on the head Instantly, the crowd started yelling "the Yids are beating the Russians!" and a brawl ensued. (Note that it had happened in the same Kiev where one could already see the streamers "Long live free Ukraine without Yids and Poles!") By that

time “Smash the Yids!” could be heard in almost every street brawl, even in Petrograd, and often completely without foundation. For instance, in a Petrograd streetcar two women “called for disbanding of the Soviet of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies, filled, according to them, exclusively by ‘Germans and Yids’. Both were arrested and called to account.”[68]

Newspaper Russkaya Volya (Russian Freedom) reported: “Right in front of our eyes, anti-Semitism, in its most primitive form … re-arises and spreads…. It is enough to hear to conversations in streetcars [in Petrograd] or in waiting lines to various shops, or in the countless fleeting rallies at every corner and crossroad … they accuse Jews of political stranglehold, of seizing parties and soviets, and even of ruining the army … of looting and hoarding goods.”[69]

Many Jewish socialists, agitators in the front units, enjoyed unlimited success during the spring months when calls for a “democratic peace” were tolerated and fighting was not required. Then nobody blamed them for being Jewish. But in June when the policy of the Executive Committee had changed toward support and even propaganda for the offensive, calls of “smash the Yids!” began appearing and those Jewish persuaders suffered battering by unruly soldiers time and time again.

Rumors were spreading that the Executive Committee in Petrograd was “seized by Yids.” By June this belief had taken root in the Petrograd garrison and factories; this is exactly what soldiers shouted to the member of the Committee Voitinsky who had visited an infantry regiment to dissuade the troops from the looming demonstration conceived by Bolsheviks on June 10.

V. D. Nabokov, hardly known for anti-Semitism, joked that the meeting of the foremen of the Pre-Parliament in October 1917 “could be safely called a Sanhedrin”: its majority was Jewish; of Russians, there were only Avksentiev, me, Peshekhonov, and Chaikovsky….” His attention was drawn to that fact by Mark Vishnyak who was present there also.[70]

By autumn, the activity of Jews in power had created such an effect that even Iskry (Sparks), the illustrated supplement to the surpassingly gentle Russkoe Slovo (Russian Word) that would until then never dare defying public opinion in such a way, had published an abrasive anti-Jewish caricature in the October 29 issue, that is, already during fights of the October coup in Moscow.

The Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies actively fought against anti-Semitism. (I cannot rule out that the harsh refusal to accept the well-deserved Plekhanov into the CEC in April 1917 was a kind of revenge for his anti-Bund referral to the “tribe of Gad,” which was mentioned in Lenin’s publications.[71]Indeed, I cannot provide any other explanation.) On July 21 the 1st All-Russian Congress of Soviets had issued a proclamation about a struggle against anti-Semitism (“about the only resolution approved by the Congress unanimously, without any objections or arguments”[72]). When in the end of June (28th and 29th) the re-elected Bureau of the CEC had assembled, they had heard a

report on "the rise of anti-Semitic agitation … mainly in the northwestern and southwestern" guberniyas; a decision was made immediately to send a delegation of 15 members of the CEC with special powers there[73], subordinating them to the direction of the "Department on the Struggle against Counter-Revolution."

On the other hand, Bolsheviks, who advanced their agenda under the slogan "Down with the ministers-capitalists!" not only did nothing to alleviate this problem, they even fanned its flames (along with the anarchists, despite the fact that the latter were headed by one Bleikhman). They claimed that the Executive Committee was so exceptionally lenient toward the government only because capitalists and Jews control everything (isn't that reminiscent of Narodnaya Volya [the People's Will terrorist organization] of 1881?).

And when the Bolshevik uprising of July 3-4 broke out (it was in fact targeted not against the already impotent Provisional Government but against the Bolshevik's true competitor – Executive Committee), the Bolsheviks slyly exploited the anger of soldiers toward Jews by pointing them to that very body – see, there they are!

But when the Bolsheviks had lost their uprising, the CEC had conducted an official investigation and many members of the commission of inquiry were Jews from the presidium of the CEC. And because of their "socialist conscience" they dared not call the Bolshevik uprising a crime and deal with it accordingly. So the commission had yielded no result and was soon liquidated.

During the garrison meeting, arranged by the CEC on October 19, just before the decisive Bolshevik uprising, "one of representatives of 176th Infantry Regiment, a Jew," warned that "those people down on the streets scream that Jews are responsible for all the wrongs."[74] At the CEC meeting during the night of October 25, Gendelman reported that when he was giving a speech in the Peter and Paul Fortress earlier that afternoon he was taunted: "You are Gendelman! That is you are a Yid and a Rightist!"[75] When on October 27 Gotz and his delegation to Kerensky tried to depart to Gatchina from the Baltiysky Rail Terminal, he was nearly killed by sailors who screamed that "the soviets are controlled by Yids."[76] And during the 'wine pogroms' on the eve of the 'glorious Bolshevik victory,' the calls "Slaughter Yids!" were heard also.

And yet there was not a single Jewish pogrom over the whole year of 1917. The infamous outrageous pogroms in Kalusha and Ternopol were in fact the work of frenzied drunken revolutionary soldiers, retreating in disorder. They smashed everything on their way, all shops and stores; and because most of those were Jewish-owned, the word spread about 'Jewish pogroms'. A similar pogrom took place in Stanislavov, with its much smaller Jewish population, and quite reasonably it was not labeled a 'Jewish' pogrom.

Already by the mid-summer of 1917 the Jews felt threatened by the embittered population (or drunken soldiers), but the ongoing collapse of the state was fraught with incomparably greater dangers. Amazingly, it seems that both the Jewish community and the press, the

latter to a large extent identified with the former, learned nothing from the formidable experiences of 1917 in general, but narrowly looked at the "isolated manifestations of pogroms." And so time after time they missed the real danger. The executive power behaved similarly. When the Germans breached the front at Ternopol in the night of July 10, the desperate joint meeting of the CEC of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Peasants' Deputies had taken place. They had acknowledged that should the revolution perish, the country crumbles down (in that exact order), and then named Provisional Government a "Government for Salvation of the Revolution," and noted in their appeal to the people that "dark forces are again prepared to torment our longsuffering Motherland. They are setting backward masses upon the Jews."[77]

On July 18 at a panel session of the State Duma, in an extremely small circle, Rep. Maslennikov spoke against the Executive Committee and among other things spelled out the real names of its members. On the very same evening at the factional meeting of the CEC they beat an alarm: "This is a case of counterrevolution, it must be dealt with according to the recently issued decree of the Minister of Internal Affairs Tsereteli on suppression of counterrevolution! (The decree was issued in response to the Bolshevik uprising, though it was never used against Bolsheviks.) In two days Maslennikov made excuses in an article in the newspaper Rech [Speech]: indeed, he named Steklov, Kamenev, and Trotsky but never intended to incite anger against the entire Jewish people, and "anyway, attacking them, I had absolutely no wish to make Jewish people responsible for the actions of these individuals."[78]

Then, in mid-September, when the all gains of the February Revolution were already irreversibly ruined, on the eve of the by now imminent Bolshevik coup, Ya. Kantorovich warned in Rech about the danger that: "The dark forces and evil geniuses of Russia will soon emerge from their dens to jubilantly perform Black Masses…." Indeed, it will happen soon. Yet what kind of Black masses? – "…Of bestial patriotism and pogrom-loving 'truly-Russian' national identity."[79] In October in Petrograd I. Trumpeldor had organized Jewish self-defense forces for protection against pogroms, but they were never needed.

Indeed, Russian minds were confused, and so were Jewish ones.

Several years after the revolution, G. Landau, looking back with sadness, wrote: "Jewish participation in the Russian turmoil had astonishingly suicidal overtones in it; I am referring not only to their role in Bolshevism, but to their involvement in the whole thing. And it is not just about the huge number of politically active people, socialists and revolutionaries, who have joined the revolution; I am talking mainly about the broad sympathy of the masses it was met with…. Although many harbored pessimistic expectations, in particular, an anticipation of pogroms, they were still able to reconcile such a foreboding with an acceptance of turmoil which unleashed countless miseries and pogroms. It resembled the fatal attraction of butterflies to fire, to the annihilating fire…. It is certain there were some

strong motives pushing the Jews into that direction, and yet those were clearly suicidal…. Granted, Jews were not different in that from the rest of Russian intelligentsia and from the Russian society…. Yet we had to be different … we, the ancient people of city-dwellers, merchants, artisans, intellectuals … we had to be different from the people of land and power, from peasants, landowners, officials."[80]

And let's not forget those who were different. We must always remember that Jewry was and is very heterogeneous, that attitudes and actions vary greatly among the Jews. So it was with the Russian Jewry in 1917: in provinces and even in the capital there were circles with reasonable views and they were growing as October was getting closer.

The Jewish stance toward Russian unity during the months when Russia was pulled apart not only by other nations, but even by Siberians, was remarkable. "All over the course of revolution Jews, together with Great Russians, were among the most ardent champions of the idea of Great Russia."[81] Now, when Jews had gotten their equal rights, what could they have in common with different peoples on the periphery of the former empire? And yet the disintegration of a united country would fracture Jewry. In July at the 9th Congress of Constitutional Democrats, Vinaver and Nolde openly argued against territorial partition of peoples and in favor of Russian unity.[82] Also in September, in the national section of the Democratic Conference, the Jewish socialists spoke against any federalization of Russia (in that they had joined the Centralists). Today they write in an Israeli magazine that Trumpeldor's Jewish detachments "backed the Provisional Government and had even foiled the Kornilov's mutiny."[83] Perhaps. However, in rigorously studying events of 1917, I did not encounter any such information. But I am aware of opposite instances: in early May 1917 in the thundering patriotic and essentially counter-revolutionary "Black Sea Delegation," the most successful orator calling for the defense of Russia was Jewish sailor Batkin.

D. Pasmanik had published the letters of millionaire steamship owner Shulim Bespalov to the Minister of Trade and Industry Shakhovsky dated as early as September 1915: "Excessive profits made by all industrialists and traders lead our Motherland to the imminent wreck." He had donated half a million rubles to the state and proposed to establish a law limiting all profits by 15%. Unfortunately, these self-restricting measures were not introduced as 'rush to freedom' progressives, such as Konovalov and Ryabushinsky, did not mind making 100% war profits. When Konovalov himself became the Minister of Trade and Industry, Shulim Bespalov wrote to him on July 5, 1917: "Excessive profits of industrialists are ruining our country, now we must take 50% of the value of their capitals and property," and added that he is ready to part with 50% of his own assets. Konovalov paid no heed.[84]

In August, at the Moscow All-Russian State Conference, O. O. Gruzenberg (a future member of the Constituent Assembly) stated: "These days the Jewish people … are united in their allegiance to our Motherland, in unanimous aspiration to defend her integrity and achievements of democracy" and were prepared to give for her defense "all their material

and intellectual assets, to part with everything precious, with the flower of their people, all their young."[85]

These words reflected the realization that the February regime was the best for the Russian Jewry, promising economic progress as well as political and cultural prosperity. And that realization was adequate.

The closer it got to to October coup and the more apparent the Bolshevik threat, the wider this realization spread among Jews, leading them to oppose Bolshevism. It was taking root even among socialist parties and during the October coup many Jewish socialists were actively against it. Yet they were debilitated by their socialist views and their opposition was limited by negotiations and newspaper articles – until the Bolsheviks shut down those newspapers.

It is necessary to state explicitly that the October coup was not carried by Jews (though it was under the general command of Trotsky and with energetic actions of young Grigory Chudnovsky during the arrest of Provisional Government and the massacre of the defenders of the Winter Palace). Broadly speaking, the common rebuke, that the 170-million-people could not be pushed into Bolshevism by a small Jewish minority, is justified. Indeed, we had ourselves sealed our fate in 1917, through our foolishness from February to October-December.

The October coup proved a devastating lot for Russia. Yet the state of affairs even before it promised little good to the people. We had already lost responsible statesmanship and the events of 1917 had proved it in excess. The best Russia could expect was an inept, feeble, and disorderly pseudo-democracy, unable to rely on enough citizens with developed legal consciousness and economic independence.

After October fights in Moscow, representatives of the Bund and Poale-Zion had taken part in the peace negotiations – not in alliance with the Junkers or the Bolsheviks — but as a third independent party. There were many Jews among Junkers of the Engineers School who defended the Winter Palace on October 25: in the memoirs of Sinegub, a palace defender, Jewish names appear regularly; I personally knew one such engineer from my prison experience. And during the Odessa City Duma elections the Jewish block had opposed the Bolsheviks and won, though only marginally.

During the Constituent Assembly elections "more than 80% of Jewish population in Russia had voted" for Zionist parties.[86] Lenin wrote that 550 thousands voted for Jewish nationalists.[87] "Most Jewish parties have formed a united national list of candidates; seven deputies were elected from that list – six Zionists" and Gruzenberg. The success of Zionists was facilitated by the recently published declaration of British Minister of Foreign Affairs Balfour on the establishment of 'Jewish national home' in Palestine, which was "met with enthusiasm by the majority of Russian Jewry (celebratory demonstrations, rallies and worship services took place in Moscow, Petrograd, Odessa, Kiev and many other cities)."[88]

Prior to the October coup, Bolshevism was not very influential among Jews. But just before the uprising, Natanson, Kamkov, and Shteinberg on behalf of the left Socialist Revolutionaries had signed a combat pact with Bolsheviks Trotsky and Kamenev.[89] And some Jews distinguished themselves among the Bolsheviks in their very first victories and some even became famous. The commissar of the famed Latvian regiments of the 12th Army, which did so much for the success of Bolshevik coup, was Semyon Nakhimson. "Jewish soldiers played a notable role during preparation and execution of the armed uprising of October 1917 in Petrograd and other cities, and also during suppression of mutinies and armed resurrections against the new Soviet regime."[90]

It is widely known that during the 'historical' session of the Congress of Soviets on October 27 two acts, the 'Decree on Land' and the 'Decree on Peace', were passed. But it didn't leave a mark in history that after the 'Decree on Peace' but before the 'Decree on Land' another resolution was passed. It declared it "a matter of honor for local soviets to prevent Jewish and any other pogroms by dark forces."[91](Pogroms by 'Red forces of light' were not anticipated.)

So even here, at the Congress of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies, the Jewish question was put ahead of the peasant one.

Sources:

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[3] Russkaya Volya, April 23, 1917, p. 4.

[4] Birzhevye Vedomosti, May 24, 1917, p. 2.

[5] See, for instance, Russkaya Volya, May 10, 1917, p. 5; Birzhevye Vedomosti, May 9, 1917, p. 5; Birzhevye Vedomosti, June 1, 1917, p. 6; Rech, July 29, 1917, p. 6.

[6] Kratkaya Evreiskaya Entsiklopediya [The Short Jewish Encyclopedia (henceforth—SJE)]. Jerusalem, 1994. v. 7, p. 399.

[7] Ibid., p. 380-381.

[8] Ibid., p. 379.

[9] G. Aronson. Evreyskaya obshchestvennost v Rossii v 1917-1918 [The Jewish Public in Russia in 1917-1918] // Kniga o russkom evreystve: 1917-1967 [The Book of Russian Jewry: 1917-1967 (henceforth — BRJ-2)]. New York: Association of Russian Jews, 1968, p. 6.

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[11] Izvestiya, April 9, 1917, p. 4.

[12] SJE, v.7, p. 378-379.

[13] SJE, v.7, p. 378.

[14] Izvestiya, September 15, 1917, p. 2.

[15] SJE, v.6, p. 85; v.7, p. 379.

[16] SJE, v.7, p. 378.

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[22] Ibid., p. 380-381.

[23] Ibid., p. 379.

[24] Rech, April 27, 1917, p. 3.

[25] SJE, v.7, p. 378.

[26] Russkaya Volya, April 25, 1917, p. 5.

[27] A. I. Denikin. Ocherki russkoi smuty. V1: Krushenie vlasti I armii, fevral-sentyabr 1917 [Russian Turmoil. Memoirs. V1: Collapse of Authority and Army]. Paris, 1922, p. 129-130.

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[29] Birzhevye Vedomosti, May 5, 1917, p. 2.

[30] SJE, v.4, p. 775.

[31] SJE, v.5, p. 475.

[32] Obshchee delo, October 14 and 16, 1917

[33] A. Sutton. Wall Street and the Bolshevik Revolution. Translation from English, Moscow, 1998, p. 14-36.

[34] Rech, June 27, 1917, p. 3; June 28, p. 2-3.

[35] Rech, August 2, 1917, p. 3.

[36] Russkaya Evreiskaya Entsiklopediya [The Russian Jewish Encyclopedia (henceforth—RJE)]. 2nd edition, Moscow, 1994 – 1997. v. 1, p. 240, 427; v. 2, p. 124; v. 3, p. 29, 179, 280.

[37] RJE, v. 1, p. 473; v. 3, p. 41.

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[39] RJE, v. 2, p. 85; v. 3, p. 106.

[40] RJE, v. 3, p. 224, 505; v. 1, p. 239.

[41] Rech, June 28, 1917, p. 2.

[42] Russkaya Volya, April 13, 1917, p. 3.

[43] Russkaya Volya, April 9, 1917, p. 3.

[44] Birzhevye vedomosti, May 7, 1917, p. 3.

[45] G. Aronson. Evreyskaya obshchestvennost v Rossii v 1917-1918 [The Jewish Public in Russia in 1917-1918]. // BRJ-2, p. 7.

[46] RJE, v. 7, p. 381.

[47] Ibid.

[48] I. O. Levin. Evrei v revolutsii [The Jews in the Revolution]. // RJ, p. 124.

[49] RJE, v. 7, p. 399.

[50] G. Aronson. Evreyskaya obshchestvennost v Rossii v 1917-1918 [The Jewish Public in Russia in 1917-1918] // BRJ-2, p. 10. RJE, v. 7, p. 381.

[51] RJE, v. 3, p. 162, 293.

[52] G. Aronson. Evreyskaya obshchestvennost v Rossii v 1917-1918 [The Jewish Public in Russia in 1917-1918] // BRJ-2, p. 7.

[53] Izvestiya, November 8, 1917, p. 5.

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[74] Rech, October 20, 1917, p. 3.

[75] Izvestiya, October 26, 1917, p. 2.

[76] Delo Naroda, October 29, 1917, p. 1.

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Chapter 15

Alongside the Bolsheviks

This theme—the Jews alongside the Bolsheviks—is not new, far from it. How many pages already written on the subject! The one who wants to demonstrate that the revolution was “anything but Russian”, “foreign by nature”, invokes Jewish surnames and pseudonyms, thus claiming to exonerate the Russians from all responsibility in the revolution of seventeen. As for the Jewish authors, those who denied the Jews’ share in the revolution as well as those who have always recognised it, all agree that these Jews were not Jews *by spirit*, they were *renegades*.

We also agree on that. We must judge people for their *spirit*. Yes, they were renegades.

But the Russian leaders of the Bolshevik Party were also not Russians by the spirit; they were very anti-Russian, and certainly anti-Orthodox. With them, the great Russian culture, reduced to a doctrine and to political calculations, was distorted.

The question should be asked in another way, namely: how many scattered renegades should be brought together to form a homogeneous political current? What proportion of nationals? As far as the Russian renegades are concerned, the answer is known: alongside the Bolsheviks there were enormous numbers, an unforgivable number. But for the Jewish renegades, what was, by the enrolment and by the energy deployed, their share in the establishment of Bolshevik power?

Another question concerns the attitude of the nation towards its own renegades. However, the latter was contrasted, ranging from abomination to admiration, from mistrust to adherence. It has manifested itself in the very reactions of the popular masses, whether Russian, Jewish, or Lithuanian, in life itself much more than in the briefings of historians.

And finally: can nations deny their renegades? Is there any sense in this denial? Should a nation remember or not remember them? Can it forget the monster they have begotten? To this question the answer is no doubt: it is necessary to remember. Every people must remember its own renegades, remember them as *their own*—to that, there is no escape.

And then, deep down, is there an example of renegade more striking than Lenin himself? However, Lenin was Russian, there is no point in denying it. Yes, he loathed, he detested everything that had to do with ancient Russia, all Russian history and *a fortiori* Orthodoxy. From Russian literature he had retained only Chernyshevsky and Saltykov-Shchedrin; Turgenev, with his liberal spirit, amused him, and Tolstoy the accuser, too. He never showed the least feeling of affection for anything, not even for the river, the Volga, on whose banks his childhood took place (and did he not instigate a lawsuit against his peasants for damage to his lands?). Moreover: it was he who pitilessly delivered the whole region to the appalling famine of 1921. Yes, all this is true. But it was we, the Russians, who created the climate in which Lenin grew up and filled him with hatred. It is in *us* that the Orthodox faith has lost its vigour, this faith in which he could have grown instead of declaring it a merciless war. How can one not see in him a renegade? And yet, he is Russian, and we Russians, we answer for him. His ethnic origins are sometimes invoked. Lenin was a mestizo issued from different races: his paternal grandfather, Nikolai Vasilyevich, was of Kalmyk and Chuvash blood, his grandmother, Anna Aleksievna Smirnova, was a Kalmyk, his other grandfather, Israel (Alexander of his name of baptism) Davidovitch Blank, was a Jew, his other grandmother, Anna Iohannovna (Ivanovna) Groschopf, was the daughter of a German and a Swede, Anna Beata Estedt. But that does not change the case. For nothing of this makes it possible to exclude him from the Russian people: we must recognise in him a *Russian* phenomenon on the one hand, for all the ethnic groups which gave him birth have been implicated in the history of the Russian Empire, and, on the other hand, a *Russian* phenomenon, the fruit of the country we have built, we Russians, and its social climate—even if he appears to us, because of his spirit always indifferent to Russia, or even completely anti-Russian, as a phenomenon completely foreign to us. We cannot, in spite of everything, disown him.

What about the Jewish renegades? As we have seen, during the year 1917, there was no particular attraction for the Bolsheviks that manifested among the Jews. But their activism has played its part in the revolutionary upheavals. At the

last Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP) (London, 1907), which was, it is true, common with the Mensheviks, of 302–305 delegates, 160 were Jews, more than half—it was promising. Then, after the April 1917 Conference, just after the announcement of the explosive *April Theses* of Lenin, among the nine members of the new Central Committee were G. Zinoviev, L. Kamenev, Ia. Sverdlov. At the VIth summer Congress of the RKP (b) (the Russian Communist Party of the Bolsheviks, the new name of the RSDLP), eleven members were elected to the Central Committee, including Zinoviev, Sverdlov, Trotsky, Uritsky.[1] Then, at the "historic meeting" in Karpovka Street, in the apartment of Himmer and Flaksermann, on 10 October 1917, when the decision to launch the Bolshevik coup was taken, among the twelve participants were Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Sverdlov, Uritsky, Sokolnikov. It was there that was elected the first "Politburo" which was to have such a brilliant future, and among its seven members, always the same: Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Sokolnikov. Which is already a lot. D. S. Pasmanik clearly states: "There is no doubt that the Jewish renegades outnumbered the normal percentage…; they occupied too great a place among the Bolshevik commissioners."[2]

Of course, all this was happening in the governing spheres of Bolshevism and in no way foreshadowed a mass movement of Jews. Moreover, the Jewish members of the Politburo did not act as a constituted group. Thus Kamenev and Zinoviev were against a hasty coup. The only master of the work, the genius of October's *coup de force*, was in fact Trotsky: he did not exaggerate his role in his *Lessons of October*. This cowardly Lenin, who, he, had been hiding out, made no substantial contribution to the putsch.

Basically, because of his internationalism and following his dispute with the Bund in 1903, Lenin adhered to the opinion that there was not and never would be such a thing as a "Jewish nationality"; that this was a reactionary action which disunited the revolutionary forces. (In agreement with him, Stalin held the Jews for a "paper nation", and considered their assimilation inevitable.) Lenin therefore saw anti-Semitism as a manœuvre of capitalism, an easy weapon in the hands of counter-revolution, something that was not natural. He understood very well, however, what mobilising force the Jewish question represented in the ideological struggle in general. And to exploit, for the good of the revolution, the feeling of bitterness particularly prevalent among the Jews, Lenin was always ready to do so.

From the first days of the revolution, however, this appeal proved to be oh so necessary! Lenin clung to it. He, who had not foreseen everything on the plane of the state, had not yet perceived how much the cultivated layer of the Jewish nation, and even more so its semi-cultivated layer, which, as a result of the war, was found scattered throughout the whole of Russia, was going to save the day throughout decisive months and years. To begin with, it was going to take the place of the Russian officials massively determined to boycott the Bolshevik power. This population was composed of border residents who had been driven out of their villages and who had not returned there after the end of the war. (For example, Jews expelled from Lithuania during the war had not all returned after the revolution: only the small rural people had returned, while the "urban contingent" of the Jews of Lithuania and "the young had stayed to live in the big cities of Russia."[3])

And it was precisely "after the abolition of the Pale of Settlement in 1917 that the great exodus of Jews from its boundaries into the interior of the country ensued."[4] This exodus is no longer that of refugees or expellees, but indeed of new settlers. Information from a Soviet source for the year 1920 testifies: "In the city of Samara, in recent years, tens of thousands of Jewish refugees and expellees have established themselves"; in Irkutsk, "the Jewish population has increased, reaching fifteen thousand people; important Jewish settlements were formed in Central Russia as well as on the banks of the Volga and the Urals." However, "the majority continue to live on subsidies from social welfare and other philanthropic organisations." And here are the *Izvestia* calling for "the Party organisations, the Jewish sections and the departments of the National Commissariat to organise a vast campaign for the non-return to the 'tombs of the ancestors' and for the participation in the work of production in Soviet Russia."[5]

But put yourself in the place of the Bolsheviks: they were only a small handful that had seized power, a power that was so fragile: in whom, great gods, could one have confidence? Who could be called to the rescue? Simon (Shimon) Dimantstein, a Bolshevik from the very beginning and who, since January 1918, was at the head of a European Committee specially created within the Commissariat of Nationalities, gives us the thought of Lenin on this subject: "the fact that a large part of the middle Jewish intelligentsia settled in Russian cities has rendered a proud service to the revolution. They defeated the vast sabotage enterprise we faced after the October Revolution, which was a great danger

to us. They were numerous—not all, of course, far from it—to sabotage this sabotage, and it was they who, at that fateful hour, saved the revolution." Lenin considered it "inappropriate to emphasise this episode in the press…", but he remarked that "if we succeeded in seizing and restructuring the State apparatus, it was exclusively thanks to this pool of new civil servants—lucid, educated, and reasonably competent."[6]

The Bolsheviks thus *appealed* to the Jews from the very first hours of their takeover, offering to some executive positions, to others tasks of execution within the Soviet State apparatus. And many, many, answered the call, and immediately entered. The new power was in desperate need of executors who were faithful in every way—and there were many of them among the young secularised Jews, who thus mingled with their colleagues, Slavs and others. These were not necessarily "renegades": there were among them some without political party affiliations, persons outside the revolution, who had hitherto remained indifferent to politics. For some, this approach was not ideological; it could be dictated only by personal interest. It was a mass phenomenon. And from that time the Jews no longer sought to settle in the forbidden countryside, they endeavoured to reach the capitals: "Thousands of Jews joined the Bolsheviks in crowds, seeing them as the most fierce defenders of the revolution and the most reliable internationalists… The Jews abounded in the lower levels of the Party apparatus."[7]

"The Jew, who obviously could not have come from the nobility, the clergy, or the civil service, found himself among the ranks of the personalities of the future of the new clan."[8] In order to promote the Jews' commitment to Bolshevism, "at the end of 1917, while the Bolsheviks were still sketching out their institutions, a Jewish department within the Commissariat of Nationalities began to function."[9] This department was, since 1918, transformed into a separate European Commissariat. And in March 1919, at the VIIIth Congress of the RKP (b), the Communist European Union of Soviet Russia was to be proclaimed as an integral but autonomous part of the RKP (b). (The intention was to integrate this Union into the Comintern and thereby permanently undermine the Bund). A special European section within the Russian Telegraph Agency was also created (ROSTA).

D. Schub justifies these initiatives by saying that "large contingents of the Jewish youth joined the Communist Party" following the pogroms in the territories occupied by the Whites[10] (i.e. from 1919 onwards). But this explanation does not hold the road. For the massive entry of the Jews into the Soviet apparatus occurred towards the end of the year 1917 and during 1918. There is no doubt that the events of 1919 (see *infra*, chapter 16) strengthened the link between the Jewish elites and the Bolsheviks, but they in no way provoked it. Another author, a communist, explains "the particularly important role of the Jewish revolutionary in our labour movement" by the fact that we can observe with the Jewish workers, "highly developed, the traits of character required of any leading role," traits which are still in draft form among the Russian workers: an exceptional energy, a sense of solidarity, a systematic mind.[11]

Few authors deny the role of organisers that was that of the Jews in Bolshevism. D. S. Pasmanik points out: "The appearance of Bolshevism is linked to the peculiarities of Russian history… But its excellent organisation, Bolshevism, is due in part to the action of the Jewish commissioners."[12] The active role of the Jews in Bolshevism did not escape the notice of observers, notably in America: "The Russian revolution rapidly moved from the destructive phase to the constructive phase, and this is clearly attributable to the edifying genius inherent to Jewish dissatisfaction."[13] In the midst of the euphoria of October, how many were not, the Jews themselves admit it, with their heads held high, their action within Bolshevism!

Let us remember: just as, before the revolution, the revolutionaries and liberal radicals had been quick to exploit for political purposes—and not for charity—the restrictions imposed on Jews, likewise, in the months and years that followed October, the Bolsheviks, with the utmost complaisance, used the Jews within the State apparatus and the Party, too, not because of sympathy, but because they found their interest in the competence, intelligence and the particularism of the Jews towards the Russian population. On the spot they used Latvians, Hungarians, Chinese: these were not going to be sentimental…

The Jewish population in its mass showed a suspicious, even hostile attitude towards the Bolsheviks. But when, as a result of the revolution, it had acquired complete freedom which fostered a real expansion of Jewish activity in the political, social and cultural spheres—a well-organised activity to boot—it did nothing to prevent the Bolshevik Jews

from occupying the key positions, and these made an exceedingly cruel use of this new power fallen into their hands.

From the 40s of the twentieth century onwards, after Communist rule broke with international Judaism, Jews and communists became embarrassed and afraid, and they preferred to stay quiet and conceal the strong participation of Jews in the communist revolution, however the inclinations to remember and name the phenomenon were described by the Jews themselves as purely anti-Semitic intentions.

In the 1970s and 1980s, under the pressure of new revelations, the vision of the revolutionary years was adjusted. A considerable number of voices were heard publicly. Thus the poet Nahum Korzhavin wrote: "If we make the participation of the Jews in the revolution a taboo subject, we can no longer talk about the revolution at all. There was a time when the pride of this participation was even prized… The Jews took part in the revolution, and in abnormally high proportions."[14] M. Agursky wrote on his part: "The participation of the Jews in the revolution and the civil war has not been limited to a very active engagement in the State apparatus; it has been infinitely wider."[15] Similarly, the Israeli Socialist S. Tsyroulnikov asserts: "At the beginning of the revolution, the Jews… served as the foundation of the new regime."[16]

But there are also many Jewish writers who, up to this day, either deny the Jews' contribution to Bolshevism, or even reject the idea rashly, or—this is the most frequent—consider it only reluctantly.

However the fact is proven: Jewish *renegades* have long been *leaders* in the Bolshevik Party, heading the Red Army (Trotsky), the VTsIK (Sverdlov), the two capitals (Zinoviev and Kamenev), the Comintern (Zinoviev), the Profintern (Dridzo-Lozovski) and the Komsomol (Oscar Ryvkin, and later Lazar Shatskin, who also headed the International Communist Youth).

"It is true that in the first Sovnarkom there was only one Jew, but that one was Trotsky, the number two, behind Lenin, whose authority surpassed that of all the others."[17] And from November 1917 to the summer of 1918, the real organ of government was not the Sovnarkom, but what was called the "Little Sovnarkom": Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, Kareline, Prochian. After October, the VTsIK Presidium was of equal importance to that of the Sovnarkom, and among its six members were Sverdlov, Kamenev, Volodarski, Svetlov-Nakhamkis.

M. Agursky rightly points out: for a country where it was not customary to see Jews in power, what a contrast! "A Jew in the presidency of the country… a Jew in the Ministry of War… There was there something to which the ethnic population of Russia could hardly accustom itself to."[18] Yes, what a contrast! Especially when one knows of *what* president, of *what* minister it was!

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The first major action of the Bolsheviks was, by signing the peace separated from Brest-Litovsk, to cede to Germany an enormous portion of the Russian territory, in order to assert their power over the remaining part. The head of the signatory delegation was Ioffe; the head of foreign policy, Trotsky. His secretary and attorney, I. Zalkin, had occupied the cabinet of comrade Neratov at the ministry and purged the old apparatus to create a new organisation, the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs.

During the auditions held in 1919 in the American Senate and quoted above, the doctor A. Simons, who from 1907 to 1918 had been the dean of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Petrograd, made an interesting remark: "While they did not mince their words to criticise the Allies, Lenin, Trotsky, and their followers never expressed—at least I have never heard—the slightest blame on Germany." And at the same time, when I spoke with official representatives of the Soviet government, I discovered that they had a desire to preserve friendly relations with America as far as possible. This desire was interpreted by the allied chancelleries as an attempt to detach America from its partners. Moreover, if the Soviet regime collapsed, they expected our country [the United States] to serve as a refuge for the Bolshevik demons who could thus save their skin."[19]

The calculation is plausible. Is it not even… certain? It may be supposed that Trotsky himself, strengthened by his recent experience in America, comforted his companions with this hope.

But where the calculation of the Bolshevik leaders was more ambitious and well-founded, it was when it dealt with the use of the great American financiers.

Trotsky himself was an incontestable internationalist, and one can believe him when he declares emphatically that he rejects for himself all belonging to Jewishness. But judging by the choices he made in his appointments, we see that the renegade Jews were closer to him than the renegade Russians. (His two closest assistants were Glazman and Sermuks, the head of his personal guard, Dreitser.[20]) Thus, when it became necessary to find an authoritative and ruthless substitute to occupy this post at the War Commissariat—judge the lack!—, Trotsky named without flinching Ephraim Sklyansky, a doctor who had nothing of a soldier or a commissar. And this Sklyansky, as vice-president of the Revolutionary Council of War, would add his signature above the one of the Supreme Commander, the General S. S. Kamenev!

Trotsky did not think for a moment of the impression that the appointment of a doctor or the extraordinary promotion of a Sklyansky would make on the non-commissioned members: he could not care less. And yet, it was he who once declared: “Russia has not reached the maturity necessary to tolerate a Jew at its head”; this famous sentence shows that the question concerned him all the same when it was formulated about him…

There was also this well-known scene: the inaugural session of the Constituent Assembly is opened on 5 January 1918 by the Dean of Deputies, S. P. Chevtsov, but Sverdlov, with utter imprudence, snatches the bell from him, chases him from the tribune, and resumes the meeting. This Constituent Assembly, so long awaited, so ardently desired, that sacred sun that was about to pour happiness onto Russia—it only takes a few hours for Sverdlov and the sailor Jelezniakov to wring its neck!

The pan-Russian Commission for the election of the Constituent Assembly had previously been dissolved, and its organisation had been entrusted to a private person, the young Brodsky. As for the Assembly—so ardently desired—its management was handed to Uritsky, who was assisted by Drabkin, who was to set up a new chancellery. It was thus, by this kind of operation, that the new type of—Jewish—government was sketched. Other preliminary actions: eminent members of the Constituent Assembly, personalities known to the whole of Russia, such as the Countess Panina, an immense benefactress, were arrested by an obscure personage, a certain Gordon. (According to the newspaper *Den* [The Day], Gordon was the author of some wicked patriotic articles that appeared in *Petrogradski Kourier* [The Courier of Petrograd], then went on to trade in cabbage and chemical fertilisers—before finally becoming Bolshevik.[21])

Another thing not to be forgotten: the new masters of the country did not neglect their personal interest. In other words: they plundered honest people. “Stolen money is usually converted into diamonds… In Moscow, Sklyansky is said to be ‘the first diamond buyer’”; he was caught in Lithuania, during the baggage verification of Zinoviev’s wife, Zlata Bernstein-Lilina—“jewelery was found, worth several tens of millions of rubles.”[22] (And to say that we believed in the *legend* that the first revolutionary leaders were disinterested idealists!) In the Cheka, a trustworthy witness tells us, himself having passed in its clutches in 1920, the chiefs of the prisons were usually Poles or Latvians, while “the section in charge of the fight against traffickers, the least dangerous and the most lucrative, was in the hands of Jews.”[23]

Other than the positions at the front of the stage, there existed in the structure of Lenin’s power, as in any other conspiracy, silent and invisible figures destined to never write their names in any chronicle: from Ganetski, that adventurer Lenin liked, up to all the disturbing figures gravitating in the orbit of Parvus. (This Evgeniya Sumenson, for example, who surfaced for a short time during the summer of 1917, who was even arrested for financial manipulation with Germany and who remained in liaison with the Bolshevik leaders, although she never appeared on the lists of leaders of the apparatus) After the “days of July”, *Russkaya Volio* published raw documents on the clandestine activity of Parvus and his closest collaborator, Zurabov, who “occupies today, in the social democratic circles of Petrograd, a well-placed position”; “were also found in Petrograd Misters Binstock, Levin, Perazich and a few others.”[24]

Or also: Samuel Zaks, the brother-in-law of Zinoviev (his sister’s husband), the boss of the subsidiary of the Parvus

pharmacy in Petrograd and the son of a wealthy maker of the city, who had given the Bolsheviks, in 1917, a whole printing house. Or, belonging to the Parvus team itself, Samuel Pikker (Alexander Martynov[25], whom had formerly polemicised Lenin on theoretical questions—but now the time had come to serve the Party and Martynov had gone into hiding).

Let us mention some other striking figures. The most illustrious (for massacres in Crimea) Rosalia Zalkind-Zemlyachka, a real fury of terror: she was in 1917–1920, long before Kaganovich, secretary of the Committee of the Bolsheviks of Moscow along with V. Zagorsky, I. Zelensky, I. Piatnitsky.[26] When one knows that the Jews constituted more than a third of the population of Odessa, it is not surprising to learn that "in the revolutionary institutions of Odessa there were a great number of Jews". The President of the Revolutionary War Council, and later of the Sovnarkom of Odessa, was V. Yudovsky; the chairman of the Provincial Party Committee, the Gamarnik.[27] The latter would soon rise in Kiev to be the chairman of the provincial committees—Revolutionary Committee, Party Executive Committee, then Chairman of the Regional Committees, and finally Secretary of the Central Committee of Belarus, member of the Military Region Revolutionary War Council of Belarus.[28] And what about the rising star, Lazar Kaganovich, the president of the Provincial Committee Party of Nizhny Novgorod in 1918? In August–September, the reports of mass terror operations in the province all begin with the words: "In the presence of Kaganovich", "Kaganovitch being present"[29]—and with what vigilance!… There is a photo, which was inadvertently published and which bears this caption: "Photograph of the Presidium of one of the meetings of the Leningrad Committee, that is to say of the Petrograd Soviet after the October Revolution. The absolute majority at the presidium table is constituted of Jews."[30]

Reviewing all the names of those who have held important positions, and often even key positions, is beyond the reach of anyone. We will cite for illustrative purposes a few names, trying to attach them with a few details.—Here is Arkady Rosengoltz among the actors of the October coup in Moscow; he was afterwards a member of the Revolutionary War Councils of several army corps, then of the Republic; he was Trotsky's "closest assistant"; he then occupied a number of important posts: the Commissariat of Finance, the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate (an organ of inquisition), and finally the Commissariat for Foreign Trade for seven years.—Semyon Nakhimson, who, on the eve of October, was commissioner of the notorious Latvian skirmishers, was the fierce commissioner of the military region of Yaroslav (he was killed during an insurrection in the city).—Samuel Zwilling, who, after his victory over the Orenburg ataman, Dutov, took the head of the Orenburg District Executive Committee (he was killed shortly thereafter).—Zorakh Grindberg, Commissioner for Instruction and Fine Arts of the Northern Commune, who took a stand against the teaching of Hebrew, the "right arm" of Lunacharsky.—Here is Yevgeniya Kogan, wife of Kuybyshev: she was already in 1917 secretary of the Party Committee of the region of Samara; in 1918–19 she became a member of the Volga Military Revolutionary Tribunal; in 1920 she met at the Tashkent City Committee, then in 1921 in Moscow, where she became Secretary of the City Committee and then Secretary of the National Committee in the 1930s.—And here is the secretary of Kuybyshev, Semyon Zhukovsky: he goes from political sections to political sections of the armies; he is sometimes found in the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of Turkestan, sometimes the political leader of the Baltic Fleet (for the Bolsheviks, everything is at hand…), and, finally, at the Central Committee.— Or there are the Bielienki brothers: Abram, at the head of the personal guard of Lenin during the last five years of his life; Grigori, who moved from the Krasnaya Presnia District Committee to the position of head of the agitprop at the Comintern; finally, he is found at the Higher Council of the National Economy, the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate (RKI), at the Commissariat of Finances.—Dimanstein, after passing through the European Commission and the European Section, is at the Central Committee of Lithuania–Belarus, at the Commissariat of Instruction of Turkestan, then Head of the Political Propaganda of Ukraine.—Or Samuel Filler, an apothecary apprentice from the province of Kherson, who hoisted himself up to the presidium of the Cheka of Moscow and then of the RKI.—Anatoly (Isaac) Koltun ("deserted and emigrated immediately after", then returned in 1917): he is found both as a senior officer in the Central Control Commission of the VKP (b) and in charge of the Party of Kazakhstan, then in Yaroslavl, in Ivanovo, then back to the Control Commission, and then to the Moscow Court—and suddenly he is in Scientific Research![31] The role of the Jews is particularly visible in the RSFSR organs responsible for what constitutes the crucial problem of those years, the years of war communism: *supplies*. Let's just look at the key positions.—Moisei Frumkin: from 1918 to 1922, member of the college of the Commissariat of Supply of the RSFSR, and from 1921—in full famine—Deputy Commissioner: he is also Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Food Fund (Glavprodukt) and has as his assistant I. Rafailov.—Iakov

Brandenbourgski–Goldzinski, returning from Paris in 1917 and immediately becoming a member of the Petrograd Supply Committee and from 1918 onwards a member of the Commissariat; during the civil war, with extraordinary powers in the VTsIK for requisition operations in several provinces.—Isaak Zelensky: in 1918–20 in the supply section of the Moscow Soviet, then member of the college of the RSFSR Supply Commissariat; Later in the Secretariat of the Central Committee and Secretary for Central Asia.—Semyon Voskov (arrived from America in 1917, actor of the October coup in Petrograd): in 1918, commissioner of supply for the immense region of the North.—Miron Vladimirov–Cheinfinkel: since October 1917 as head of the supply service for the city of Petrograd, then member of the college of the Supply Commission of the RSFSR; in 1921: commissioner for the Supply for Ukraine, then for Agriculture. —Grigori Zusmanovich, commissioner in 1918 at the Supply of the Army in Ukraine.—Moisei Kalmanovitch: late 1917, commissioner of the Supply of the Western Front; In 1919–1920, commissioner of the supply of the Byelorussian SSR, then of the Lithuania–Belarus SSR, and chairman of a special commission for the supply of the Western Front (at the summit of his career: president of the Administration Council of the Central Bank of the USSR).[32]

Recently published documents inform us of the way in which the great peasant revolt of 1921 in Western Siberia broke out, the insurrection of Ichim. After the fierce requisitions of 1920, when the region had, on 1 January 1921, fulfilled the required requisition plan by 102%, the Supply Commissioner of the Tyumen Province, Indenbaum, instituted an additional week to "finalise" it, the 1st to 7th January, i.e. the week before Christmas*. The commissioner of requisitions at Ichim received, as did the others, the official direction: "Requisitions must be carried out without taking into account the consequences, confiscating, if necessary, *all the grain in the villages* (emphasised by me—A. S.) and leaving the producer only a ration of famine." In a telegram signed by his hand, Indenbaum demanded "the most merciless repression and systematic confiscation of the wheat that might still be there." In order to form the brigades of requisition, were recruited, not with the consent of Ingenbaum, thugs, and sub-proletarians who had no scruples in bludgeoning the peasants. The Latvian Matvei Lauris, a member of the Provincial Commissariat of Supply, used his power for his personal enrichment and pleasure: having taken up his quarters in a village, he had thirty-one women brought in for himself and his squad. At the Xth Congress of the RKP (b), the delegation of Tyumen reported that "the peasants who refused to give their wheat were placed in pits, watered, and died frozen."[33]

The existence of some individuals was only learned a few years later thanks to obituaries published in the Izvestia. Thus: "comrade Isaac Samoylovich Kizelstein died of tuberculosis"; he had been an agent of the Cheka College, then a member of the Revolutionary War Council of the 5th and 14th Armies, "always devoted to the Party and to the working class".[34] And oh how many of these "obscure workers" of all nationalities were found among the stranglers of Russia!

Bolshevik Jews often had, in addition to their surname as underground revolutionaries, pseudonyms, or modified surnames. Example: in an obituary of 1928, the death of a Bolshevik of the first hour, Lev Mikhailovich Mikhailov, who was known to the Party as Politikus, in other words by a nickname; his real name, Elinson, he carried it to the grave.[35] What prompted an Aron Rupelevich to take the Ukrainian surname of Taratut? Was Aronovitch Tarchis ashamed of his name or did he want to gain more weight by taking the name of Piatnitsky? And what about the Gontcharovs, Vassilenko, and others…? Were they considered in their own families as traitors or simply as cowards?

Observations made on the spot have remained. I. F. Najivin records the impressions he received at the very beginning of Soviet power: in the Kremlin, in the administration of the Sovnarkom, "reigns disorder and chaos. We see only Latvians and even more Latvians, Jews and even more Jews. I have never been an anti-Semite, but there were so many it could not escape your attention, and each one was younger than the last."[36]

Korolenko himself, as liberal and extremely tolerant as he was, he who was deeply sympathetic to the Jews who had been victims of the pogroms, noted in his Notebooks in the spring of 1919: "Among the Bolsheviks there are a great number of Jews, men and women. Their lack of tact, their assurance are striking and irritating," "Bolshevism has already exhausted itself in Ukraine, the 'Commune' encounters only hatred on its way. One sees constantly emerge among the Bolsheviks—and especially the Cheka—Jewish physiognomies, and this exacerbates the traditional feelings, still very virulent, of Judæophobia."[37]

From the early years of Soviet rule, the Jews were not only superior in number in the upper echelons of the Party, but also, more remarkably and more sensitively for the population, to local administrations, provinces and townships, to inferior spheres, where the anonymous mass of the *Streitbrecher* had come to the rescue of the new and still fragile power which had consolidated it, saved it. The author of the *Book of the Jews of Russia* writes: "One cannot fail to evoke the action of the many Jewish Bolsheviks who worked in the localities as subordinate agents of the dictatorship and who caused innumerable ills to the population of the country"—and he adds: "including the Jewish population."[38]

The omnipresence of the Jews alongside the Bolsheviks had, during these terrible days and months, the most atrocious consequences. Among them is the assassination of the Imperial family, of which, today, everybody speaks, and where the Russians now exaggerate the share of the Jews, who find in this heart-wrenching thought an evil enjoyment. As it should, the most dynamic Jews (and they are many) were at the height of events and often at the command posts. Thus, for the assassination of the Tsar's family: the guards (the assassins) were Latvians, Russians, and Magyars, but two characters played a decisive role: Philip Goloshchekin and Yakov Yurovsky (who had received baptism).

The final decision belonged to Lenin. If he dared to decide in favour of the assassination (when his power was still fragile), it was because he had foreseen both the total indifference of the Allies (the King of England, cousin of the tsar, had he not already, in the spring of 1918, refused asylum to Nicholas II?) And the fatal weakness of the conservative strata of the Russian people.

Goloshchekin, who had been exiled to Tobolsk in 1912 for four years, and who in 1917 was in the Urals, was in perfect agreement with Sverdlov: their telephone conversations between Yekaterinburg and Moscow revealed that 1918 they were on first-name basis. As early as 1912 (following the example of Sverdlov), Goloshchekin was a member of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party. After the coup of October, he became secretary of the Provincial Committee of Perm and Yekaterinburg, and later of the Ural Region Committee, in other words he had become the absolute master of the region.[39]

The project of assassination of the imperial family was ripening in the brains of Lenin and his acolytes—while, on their side, the two patrons of the Urals, Goloshchekin and Bieloborodov (president of the Ural Soviet), simmered their own machinations. It is now known that at the beginning of July 1918 Goloshchekin went to Moscow in order to convince Lenin that letting the tsar and his family "flee" was a bad solution, that they had to be openly executed, and then announce the matter publicly. Convincing Lenin that the tsar and his family should be suppressed was not necessary, he himself did not doubt it for a moment. What he feared was the reaction of the Russian people and the West. There were, however, already indications that the thing would pass without making waves. (The decision would also depend, of course, on Trotsky, Kamenev, Zinoviev, Bukharin—but they were for the time absent from Moscow, and their mentality, with the possible exception, possibly, of that of Kamenev, allowed to suppose none of them would have anything to say about it. Trotsky, as we know, approved of this without feeling any emotion. In his diary of 1935, he says that on his arrival in Moscow he had a conversation with Sverdlov. "I asked incidentally: 'By the way, where is the tsar?'—'It's done, he replied. Executed.'—'and the family?'—'the family as well, with him.'—'all of them?' I asked with a touch of astonishment. 'All of them! replied Sverdlov… so what?' He was waiting for a reaction from me. I did not answer anything. 'And who decided it?' I asked.—'All of us, here'—I did not ask any more questions, I forgot about it… Basically, this decision was more than reasonable, it was necessary—not merely in order to frighten, to scare the enemy, to make him lose all hope, but in order to electrify our own ranks, to make us understand that there was no turning back, that we had before us only an undivided victory or certain death."[40]

M. Heifets sought out who was able to attend this last council chaired by Lenin; without a doubt: Sverdlov, Dzerzhinsky; probably: Petrovsky and Vladimirski (of the Cheka), Stutchka (of the Commissariat for Justice); Perhaps: V. Schmidt. Such was the tribunal that condemned the tsar. As for Goloshchekin, he had returned to Yekaterinburg on 12 July, awaiting the last signal sent from Moscow. It was Sverdlov who transmitted Lenin's last instruction. And Yakov Yurovsky, a watchmaker, the son of a criminal who had been deported to Siberia—where was born the offspring—had been placed in July 1918 at the head of the Ipatiev house. This Yurovsky was manœuvring the operation and reflecting on the concrete means of carrying it out (with the help of Magyars and Russians, including Pavel Medvedev, Piotr Ermakov), as well as the best way of making the bodies disappear.[41] (Let us point out here the assistance provided

by P. L. Voïkov, the regional supply commissioner, who supplied barrels of gasoline and sulphuric acid to destroy the corpses.) How the deadly salvos succeeded each other in the basement of the Ipatiev house, which of these shots were mortal, who were the shooters, nobody later could specify, not even the executants. Afterwards, "Yurovsky boasted of being the best: 'It was the bullet from my colt that killed Nicholas'." But this honour also fell to Ermakov and his "comrade Mauser".[42]

Goloshchekin did not seek glory, and it is this idiot of Bieloborodov who beat him. In the 1920s, everyone knew it was him, the tsar's number one killer. In 1936, during a tour in Rostov-on-Don, during a Party Conference, he still boasted of it from the rostrum—just a year before being himself executed. In 1941 it was Goloshchekin's turn to be executed. As for Yurovsky, after the assassination of the tsar, he joined Moscow, "worked" there for a year alongside Dzerzhinsky (thus shedding blood) and died of natural death.[43]

In fact, the question of the ethnic origin of the actors has constantly cast a shadow over the revolution as a whole and on each of its events. All the participations and complicities, since the assassination of Stolypin, necessarily collided with the feelings of the Russians. Yes, but what about the assassination of the tsar's brother, Grand Duke Mikhail Alexandrovich? Who were his assassins? Andrei Markov, Gavril Myasnikov, Nikolai Zhukov, Ivan Kolpaschikov—clearly, all of them Russians.

Here, everyone must—oh how much!—ask themselves the question: have I enlightened my people with a little ray of good, or have I obscured it with all the darkness of evil?

So that is that when it comes to the executioners of the revolution. And what about the victims? Hostages and prisoners by entire batches— shot, drowned on crowded barges: the officers—Russians; the nobles—mostly Russians; the priests— Russians; members of the Zemstvos—Russians; and the peasants fleeing enlistment in the Red Army, taken up in the forests—all Russians. And this Russian intelligentsia of high moral, anti-anti-Semitic—for it also, it was bad deaths and bloody basements. If names and lists of all those who had been shot and drowned in the first years of Soviet power could be found today, from September 1918 onwards, if statistics were available, it would be surprising to find that the revolution in no way manifested its international character, but indeed its anti-Slavic character (in accordance, moreover, with the dreams of Marx and Engels).

And it is this that has imprinted this deep and cruel mark on the face of the revolution, which defines it best: *who* has it exterminated, carrying away its dead forever, without return, far from this sordid revolution and this unfortunate country, the body of this poor, misguided people?

*

During all those months, Lenin was very much occupied with the climate of tension that had arisen around the Jewish question. As early as April 1918, the Council of the People's Commissars of Moscow and the Moscow region published in the *Izvestia*[44] (thus for a wider audience than the region of Moscow alone) a circular addressed to the Soviets "on the question of the anti-Semitic propaganda of the pogroms", which evoked "events having occurred in the region of Moscow that recalled anti-Jewish pogroms" (no city was named); it stressed the need to organise "special sessions among the Soviets on the Jewish question and the fight against anti-Semitism", as well as "meetings and conferences", in short, a whole propaganda campaign. But who, by the way, was the number one culprit, who had to have his bones broken? But the Orthodox priests, of course! The first point prescribed: "Pay the utmost attention to the anti-Semitic propaganda carried out by the clergy; take the most radical measures to stop the counter-revolution and the propaganda of the priests" (we do not ask ourselves at this moment what measures these were… but, in reality, who knows them better than we do?). Then point number two recommended "to recognise the necessity to not create a separate Jewish fighting organisation" (at the time a Jewish guard was being considered). The point number four entrusted the Office of Jewish Affairs and the War Commissariat with the task of taking "preventive measures to combat anti-Jewish pogroms".

At the height of the same year 1918, Lenin recorded on gramophone a "special discourse on anti-Semitism and the

Jews". He there denounced "the cursed tsarist autocracy which had always launched uneducated workers and peasants against the Jews. The tsarist police, assisted by landowners and capitalists, perpetrated anti-Jewish pogroms. Hostility towards the Jews is perennial only where the capitalist cabal has definitely obscured the minds of the workers and the peasants… There are among the Jews workmen, men of labour, they are the majority. They are our brothers, oppressed as we are by capitalism, they are our comrades who struggle with us for socialism… Shame on the cursed tsarism!… Shame on those who sow hostility towards the Jews!"—"Recordings of this speech were carried all the way to the front, transported through towns and villages aboard special propaganda trains which criss-crossed the country. Gramophones spread this discourse in clubs, meetings, assemblies. Soldiers, workers and peasants listened to their leader's harangue and began to understand what this was all about."[45] But this speech, at the time, was not published (… by intentional omission?); it only was so in 1926 (in the book of Agursky senior).

On 27 July 1918 (just after the execution of the imperial family), the Sovnarkom promulgated a special law on anti-Semitism: "The Soviet of the People's Commissars declares that any anti-Semitic movement is a danger to the cause of the Revolution of the workers and peasants." In conclusion (from Lenin's own hand, Lunacharsky tells us): "The Sovnarkom directed all Soviet deputations to take radical measures to eradicate anti-Semitism. The inciters of pogroms, those who propagate them, will be declared outlaws." Signed: VI. Ulyanov (Lenin).[46]

If the meaning of the word "outlaw" may have escaped some at the time, in the months of the Red Terror it would appear clearly, ten years later, in a sentence of a communist militant—Larine—who was himself, for a while, the commissar of the people and even the promoter of "war communism": "to 'outlaw' the active anti-Semites was to shoot them."[47]

And then there is Lenin's famous reply to Dimanstein in 1919. Dimanstein "wished to obtain from Lenin that be retained the distribution of Gorky's tract containing such praises to the address of the Jews that it could create 'the impression that the revolution was based only on the Jews and especially on the individuals from the middle class'." Lenin replied—as we have already said—that, immediately after October, it was the Jews who had saved the revolution by defeating the resistance of the civil servants, and consequently "Gorky's opinion was perfectly correct."[48] The *Jewish Encyclopædia* does not doubt it either: "Lenin refused to sweep under the carpet the extremely pro-Semite proclamation of M. Gorky, and it was disseminated in great circulation during the civil war, in spite of the fact that it risked becoming an asset in the hands of the anti-Semites who were enemies of the revolution."[49]

And it became so, of course, for the *Whites* who saw two images merge, that of Judaism and that of Bolshevism.

The surprising (short-sighted!) indifference of the Bolshevik leaders to the popular sentiment and the growing irritation of the population is blatant when we see how much Jews were involved in repression directed against the Orthodox clergy: it was in summer 1918 that was initiated the assault on the Orthodox churches in central Russia and especially in the Moscow region (which included several provinces), an assault which only ceased thanks to the wave of rebellions in the parishes.

In January 1918, the workers who were building the fortress of Kronstadt rebelled and protested: the executive committee of the Party, composed "exclusively of non-natives", had designated for guard duty, instead of militia… Orthodox priests, while "not a Jewish rabbi, not a Moslem mullah, not a Catholic pastor, not a Protestant pastor, was put to use."[50] (Let us note in passing that even on this small, fortified island of the "prison of the peoples" there were places of worship for all the confessions…)

A text entitled "Charge on the Jews!" appeared even all the way to the *Pravda*, a call from the workers of Arkangelsk "to Russian workers and peasants conscious of their fate", in which they read: "are profaned, defiled, plundered"—"exclusively Orthodox churches, never synagogues… Death by hunger and disease carries hundreds of thousands of innocent lives among the Russians," while "the Jews do not die of hunger or disease."[51] (There was also, during the summer 1918, "a criminal case of anti-Semitism in the church of Basil the Blissful, in Moscow…").

What madness on the part of the Jewish militants to have mingled with the ferocious repression exerted by the Bolsheviks against Orthodoxy, even more fierce than against the other confessions, with this persecution of priests, with

this outburst in the press of sarcasms aimed at the Christ! The Russian pens also zealously attacked Demian Bedny (Efim Pridvorov), for example, and he was not the only one. Yes, the Jews should have stayed out of it.

On 9 August 1919, Patriarch Tikhon wrote to the president of the VTsIK Kalinin (with a copy to the Sovnarkom president, Ulyanov–Lenin) to demand the dismissal of the investigating magistrate Chpitsberg, in charge of the "affairs" of the Church: "a man who publicly outrages the religious beliefs of people, who openly mocks ritual gestures, who, in the preface to the book *The Religious Plague* (1919), gave Jesus Christ abominable names and thus profoundly upset my religious feeling."[52] The text was transmitted to the Small Sovnarkom, from which came the reply on 3 September: "classify the complaint of citizen Belavine (Patriarch Tikhon) without follow-up."[53] But Kalinin changed his mind and addressed a secret letter to the Justice Commissioner, Krasikov, saying that he believed that "for practical and political considerations… replace Chpitsberg with someone else", given that "the audience in the court is probably in its majority Orthodox" and that it is therefore necessary "to deprive the religious circles… of their main reason for ethnic revenge."[54]

And what about the profanation of relics? How could the masses understand such an obvious outrage, so provocative? "'Could the Russians, the Orthodox have done such things?' they asked each other across Russia. 'All that, it is the Jews who have plotted it. It makes no difference, to those who crucified Christ'."[55]—And who is responsible for this state of mind, if not the Bolshevik power, by offering to the people spectacles of such savagery?

S. Bulgakov, who followed closely what happened to Orthodoxy under the Bolsheviks, wrote in 1941: "In the USSR, the persecution of Christians "surpassed in violence and amplitude all previous persecutions known throughout History. Of course, we should not blame everything on the Jews, but we should not downplay their influence."[56]—"Were manifested in Bolshevism, above all, the force of will and the energy of Judaism."—"The part played by the Jews in Bolshevism is, alas, disproportionately great. And it is above all *the sin of Judaism against Ben–Israel*… And it is not the 'sacred Israel', but the strong will of Judaism that, in power, manifested itself in Bolshevism and the crushing of the Russian people."—"Although it derived from the ideological and practical programme of Bolshevism, without distinction of nationality, the persecution of Christians found its most zealous actors among Jewish 'commissioners' of militant atheism," and to have put a Goubelman– Iaroslavski at the head of the Union of the Godless was to commit "in the face of all the Russian Orthodox people an act… of religious effrontery."[57]

Another very ostensible effrontery: this way of rechristening cities and places. Custom, in fact, less Jewish than typically Soviet. But can we affirm that for the inhabitants of Gatchina, the new name of their city—Trotsk—did not have a foreign resonance? Likewise for Pavlosk, now Slutsk… Uritsky gives its name to the square of the Palace, Vorovski to the Saint-Isaac Plaza, Volodarski to the Prospect of the Founders, Nakhimson to the Saint Vladimir Prospect, Rochal to the barge of the Admiralty, and the second-class painter Isaak Brodsky gives his name to the so beautiful Saint Michael street…

They could no longer stand each other, their heads were turning. Through the immensity of Russia, it flashes by: Elisabethgrad becomes Zinovievsk… and let's go boldly! The city where the tsar was assassinated takes the name of the assassin: Sverdlovsk.

It is obvious that was present in the Russian national consciousness, as early as 1920, the idea of a national revenge on the part of Bolshevik Jews, since it even appeared in the papers of the Soviet government (it served as an argument to Kalinin).

Of course, Pasmanik's refutation was right: "For the wicked and narrow-minded, everything could not be explained more simply—the Jewish *Kahal*[*] has decided to seize Russia; or: it is the revengeful Judaism that settles its accounts with Russia for the humiliations undergone in the past."[58] Of course, we cannot explain the victory and the maintenance of the Bolsheviks.—But: if the pogrom of 1905 burns in the memory of your family, and if, in 1915, were driven out of the western territories, with the strikes of a whip, your brothers by blood, you can very well, three or four years later, want to avenge yourself in your turn with a whip or a revolver bullet. We are not going to ask whether Communist Jews consciously wanted to take revenge on Russia by destroying, by breaking the Russian heritage, but totally denying this spirit of vengeance would be denying any relationship between the inequality in rights under the tsar and the

participation of Jews in Bolshevism, a relationship that is constantly evoked.

And this is how I. M. Biekerman, confronted with “the fact of the disproportionate participation of the Jews in the work of barbaric destruction”, to those who recognise the right of the Jews to avenge past persecutions, refutes this right: “the destructive zeal of our co-religionists is blamed on the State, who, by its vexations and persecutions, would have pushed the Jews into the revolution”; well no, he says, for “it is to the manner in which an individual reacts to the evil suffered that he is distinguished from another, and the same is true of a community of men.”[59]

Later, in 1939, taking in the destiny of Judaism under the black cloud of the coming new era, the same Biekerman wrote: “The great difference between the Jews and the world around them was that they could only be the anvil, and never the hammer.”[60]

I do not intend to dig here, in this limited work, the great historical destinies, but I am expressing a categorical reservation on this point: perhaps this was so since the beginning of time, but, as of 1918, in Russia, and for another fifteen years, the Jews who joined the revolution *also* served as *hammer*—at least a large part of them.

Here, in our review, comes the voice of Boris Pasternak. In his *Doctor Zhivago*, he writes, it is true, after the Second World War, thus after the Cataclysm which came down, crushing and sinister, over the Jews of Europe and which overturned our entire vision of the world—but, in the novel itself, is discussed the years of the revolution—, he speaks of “this modest, sacrificial way of remaining aloof, which only engenders misfortune,” of “their [i.e. the Jews’] fragility and their inability to strike back.”

Yet, did we not both have before us the same country—at different ages, certainly, but where we lived the same 20s and 30s? The contemporary of those years remains mute with astonishment: Pasternak would thus not have seen (I believe) what was happening?—His parents, his painter father, his pianist mother, belonged to a highly cultivated Jewish milieu, living in perfect harmony with the Russian intelligentsia; he himself grew up in a tradition already quite rich, a tradition that led the Rubinstein brothers, the moving Levitan, the subtle Guerchenson, the philosophers Frank and Chestov, to give themselves to Russia and Russian culture… It is probable that this unambiguous choice, that perfect equilibrium between life and service, which was theirs, appeared to Pasternak as *the norm*, while the monstrous gaps, frightening relative to this norm, did not reach the retina of his eye.

On the other hand, these differences penetrated the field of view of thousands of others. Thus, witness of these years, Biekerman writes: “The too visible participation of the Jews in the Bolshevik saturnalia attracts the eyes of the Russians and those of the whole world.”[61]

No, the Jews were not the great driving force of the October coup. The latter, moreover, brought them nothing, since the February revolution had already granted them full and complete freedom. But, after the *coup de force* took place, it was then that the younger laic generation quickly changed horses and launched themselves with no less assurance into the infernal gallop of Bolshevism.

Obviously, it was not the melamedes[*] that produced this. But the reasonable part of the Jewish people let itself be overwhelmed by hotheads. And thus an almost entire generation became *renegade*. And the race was launched.

G. Landau looked for the *motives* that led the younger generation to join the camp of the new victors. He writes: “Here was the rancour with regard to the old world, and the exclusion of political life and Russian life in general, as well as a certain rationalism peculiar to the Jewish people,” and “willpower which, in mediocre beings, can take the form of insolence and ruthless ambition.”[62]

Some people seek an apology by way of explanations: “The material conditions of life after the October coup created a climate such that the Jews were forced to join the Bolsheviks.”[63] This explanation is widespread: “42% of the Jewish population of Russia were engaged in commercial activity”; they lost it; they found themselves in a dead-end situation—where to go? “In order not to die of hunger, they were forced to take service with the government, without paying too much attention to the kind of work they were asked to do.” It was necessary to enter the Soviet apparatus

where “the number of Jewish officials, from the beginning of the October Revolution, was very high.”

They had no *way out*? Did the tens of thousands of Russian officials who refused to serve Bolshevism have somewhere to go?—To starve? But how were living the others? Especially since they were receiving food aid from organisations such as the Joint, the ORT[*], financed by wealthy Jews from the West. Enlisting in the Cheka was never the *only* way out. There was at least another: not to do it, to resist.

The result, Pasmanik concludes, is that “Bolshevism became, for the hungry Jews of cities, a trade equal to the previous trades—tailor, broker, or apothecary.”[65]

But if this is so, it may be said, seventy years later, in good conscience: for those “who did not want to immigrate to the United States and become American, who did not want to immigrate to Palestine to remain Jews, for those, the only issue was communism”?[66] Again—the *only* way out!?

It is precisely *this* that is called renouncing one’s historical responsibility!

Other arguments have more substance and weight: “A people that has suffered such persecution”—and this, throughout its history—“could not, in its great majority, not become bearers of the revolutionary doctrine and internationalism of socialism,” for it “gave its Jewish followers the hope of never again being pariahs” on this very earth, and not “in the chimerical Palestine of the great ancestors.” Further on: “During the civil war already, and immediately afterwards, they were stronger in competition with the newcomers from the ethnic population, and they filled many of the voids that the revolution had created in society… In doing so, they had for the most part broken with their national and spiritual tradition,” after which “all those who wanted to assimilate, especially the first generation and at the time of their massive apparition, took root in the relatively superficial layers of a culture that was new to them.”[67]

One wonders, however, how it is possible that “the centuries-old traditions of this ancient culture have proved powerless to counteract the infatuation with the barbaric slogans of the Bolshevik revolutionaries.”[68] When “socialism, the companion of the revolution, melted onto Russia, not only were these Jews, numerous and dynamic, brought to life on the crest of the devastating wave, but the rest of the Jewish people found itself deprived of any idea of resistance and was invited to look at what was happening with a perplexed sympathy, wondering, impotent, what was going to result from it.”[69] How is it that “in every circle of Jewish society the revolution was welcomed with enthusiasm, an inexplicable enthusiasm when one knows of what disillusionments composed the history of this people”? How could “the Jewish people, rationalist and lucid, allow itself to indulge in the intoxication of revolutionary phraseology”[70]?

D. S. Pasmanik evokes in 1924 “those Jews who proclaimed loudly and clearly the genetic link between Bolshevism and Judaism, who openly boasted about the sentiments of sympathy which the mass of the Jewish people nourished towards the power of the commissioners.”[71] At the same time, Pasmanik himself pointed out “the points which may at first be the foundation of a rapprochement between Bolshevism and Judaism… These are: the concern for *happiness on earth* and that of *social justice*… Judaism was the first to put forward these two great principles.”[72]

We read in an issue of the London newspaper *Jewish Chronicle* of 1919 (when the revolution had not yet cooled down) an interesting debate on the issue. The permanent correspondent of this paper, a certain Mentor, writes that it is not fitting for the Jews to pretend that they have no connection with the Bolsheviks. Thus, in America, the Rabbi and Doctor Judah Magnes supported the Bolsheviks, which means that he did not regard Bolshevism as incompatible with Judaism.[73] He writes again the following week: Bolshevism is in itself a great evil, but, paradoxically, it also represents the hope of humanity. Was the French Revolution not bloody, it as well, and yet it was justified by History. The Jew is idealistic by nature and it is not surprising, it is even logical that he believed the promises of Bolshevism. “There is much room for reflection in the very fact of Bolshevism, in the adherence of many Jews to Bolshevism, in the fact that the ideals of Bolshevism in many respects join those of Judaism—a great number of which have been taken up by the founder of Christianity. The Jews who think must examine all this carefully. One must be foolish to see in Bolshevism only its off-putting aspects…”[74]

All the same, is not Judaism above all the recognition of the one God? But, this in itself is enough to make it incompatible with Bolshevism, the denier of God!

Still on the search for the motives for such a broad participation of the Jews in the Bolshevik adventure, I. Biekerman writes: “We might, before of the facts, despair of the future of our people—if we did not know that, of all the contagions, the worst is that of words. Why was the Jewish consciousness so receptive to this infection, the question would be too long to develop here.” The causes reside “not only in the circumstances of yesterday,” but also “in the ideas inherited from ancient times, which predispose Jews to be contaminated by ideology, even if it is null and subversive.”[75]

S. Bulgakov also writes: “The face that Judaism shows in Russian Bolshevism is by no means the true face of Israel… It reflects, even within Israel, a state of terrible spiritual crisis, which can lead to bestiality.”[76]

As for the argument that the Jews of Russia have thrown themselves into the arms of the Bolsheviks because of the vexations they have suffered in the past, it must be confronted with the two other communist shows of strength that occurred at the same time as that of Lenin, in Bavaria and in Hungary. We read in I. Levin: “The number of Jews serving the Bolshevik regime is, in these two countries, very high. In Bavaria, we find among the commissaries the Jews E. Levine, M. Levin, Axelrod, the anarchist ideologist Landauer, Ernst Toller.” “The proportion of Jews who took the lead of the Bolshevik movement in Hungary is of 95%…. However, the situation of the Jews in terms of civic rights was excellent in Hungary, where there had not been any limitation for a long time already; in the cultural and economic sphere, the Jews occupied such a position that the anti-Semites could even speak of a hold of the Jews.”[77] We may add here the remark of an eminent Jewish publisher of America; he writes that the Jews of Germany “have prospered and gained a high position in society.”[78] Let us not forget in this connection that the ferment of rebellion that was at the origin of the *coups de force*—of which we shall speak again in chapter 16—had been introduced by the Bolsheviks through the intermediary of “repatriated prisoners” stuffed with propaganda.

What brought all these rebels together—and, later, beyond the seas—, was a flurry of unbridled revolutionary internationalism, an impulse towards revolution, a revolution that was global and “permanent”. The rapid success of the Jews in the Bolshevik administration could not be ignored in Europe and the United States. Even worse: they were admired there! At the time of the passage from February to October, Jewish public opinion in America did not mute its sympathies for the Russian revolution.

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Meanwhile, the Bolsheviks were conducting their financial operations diligently abroad, mainly via Stockholm. Since Lenin’s return to Russia, secret supplies had come to them, of German provenance, through the Nia Banken of Olof Aschberg. This did not exclude the financial support of certain Russian bankers, those who, fleeing the revolution, had sought refuge abroad but had transformed there into volunteer support of the Bolsheviks. An American researcher, Anthony Sutton, has found (with half a century of delay) archival documents; he tells us that, if we are to believe a report sent in 1918 to the State Department by the U.S. Ambassador in Stockholm, “among these ‘Bolshevik bankers’ is the infamous Dmitri Rubinstein that the revolution of February had gotten out of prison, who had reached Stockholm and made himself the financial agent of the Bolsheviks”; “we also find Abram Jivotovski, a relative of Trostky and Lev Kamenev.” Among the syndicates were “Denisov of the ex-Bank of Siberia, Kamenka of the Bank Azov-Don, and Davidov of the Bank for Foreign Trade. Other ‘Bolshevik bankers’: Grigori Lessine, Shtifter, Iakov Berline, and their agent Isidore Kohn.”[79]

These had left Russia. Others, in the opposite direction, left America to return. They were the *revenants*, all of them “revolutionaries” (some from long ago, others of recent date) who dreamed of finally building and consolidating the New World of Universal Happiness. We talked about it in Chapter 14. They were flocking across the oceans from the port of New York to the East or from the port of San Francisco in direction of the West, some former subjects of the Russian Empire, others purely and simply American citizens, enthusiasts who even did not know the Russian language.

In 1919, A. V. Tyrkova–Williams wrote in a book published then in England: “There are few Russians among the Bolshevik leaders, few men imbued with Russian culture and concerned with the interests of the Russian people… In addition to foreign citizens, Bolshevism recruited immigrants who had spent many years outside the borders. Some had never been to Russia before. There were many Jews among them. They spoke Russian badly. The nation of which they had become masters was foreign to them and, moreover, they behaved like invaders in a conquered country.” And if, in tsarist Russia, “Jews were excluded from all official posts, if schools and State service were closed to them, on the other hand, in the Soviet Republic all committees and commissariats were filled with Jews. Often, they exchanged their Jewish name for a Russian name… but this masquerade did not deceive anyone.”[80]

That same year, 1919, at the Senate Hearings of the Overmen Commission, an Illinois university professor, P. B. Dennis, who arrived in Russia in 1917, declared that in his opinion—“an opinion that matched that of other Americans, Englishmen, Frenchmen…—, these people deployed in Russia an extreme cruelty and ferocity in their repression against the *bourgeoisie*” (the word is used here without any pejorative nuance in its primary sense: the inhabitants of the boroughs). Or: “Among those who carried out ‘murderous propaganda’ in the trenches and in the rear, there were those who, one or two years before [i.e. in 1917–1918], still lived New York.”[81]

In February 1920, Winston Churchill spoke in the pages of the *Sunday Herald*. In an article entitled “Zionism Against Bolshevism: Struggle for the Soul of the Jewish People”, he wrote: “Today we see this company of outstanding personalities, emerging from clandestinity, from the basements of the great cities of Europe and America, who grabbed by the hair and seized by the throat the Russian people, and established itself as the undisputed mistress of the immense Russian Empire.”[82]

There are many known names among these people who have returned from beyond the ocean. Here is M. M. Gruzenberg: he had previously lived in England (where he had met Sun Yat–sen), then lived for a long time in the United States, in Chicago where he had “organised a school for the immigrants”, and we find him in 1919 general consul of the RSFSR in Mexico (a country on which the revolutionaries founded great hopes: Trotsky would turn up there…), then, in the same year, he sat in the central organs of the Comintern. He took service in Scandinavia, Sweden; he was arrested in Scotland. He resurfaced in China in 1923 under the name of Borodin[*] with a whole squad of spies: he was the “principal political adviser to the Executive Committee of the Kuomintang”, a role which enabled him to promote the career of Mao Tse–tung and of Zhou Enlai. However, having suspected Borodin–Gruzenberg of engaging in subversive work, Chiang Kai–shek expelled him from China in 1927. Returning to the USSR, he passed unharmed the year 1937; during the war with Germany, we find him editor-in-chief of the Soviet Information Office alongside Dridzo–Lozovsky. He will be executed in 1951.[83] (About the Bolshevik Jews executed in the 1930s, see *infra*, chapter 19.)

Among them also, Samuel Agursky, who became one of the leaders of Belarus; arrested in 1938, he served a sentence of deportation. (He is the father of the late M. Agursky, who prematurely disappeared, and who did not follow the same path as his progenitor, far from it![**84]—Let us also mention Solomon Slepak, an influential member of the Comintern, he returned to Russia by Vladivostok where he took part in assassinations; he then went to China to try to attract Sun Yat–sen in an alliance with communism; his son Vladimir would have to tear himself, not without a clash, from the trap into which his father had fallen in his quest for the radiant future of communism.[85] Stories like this, and some even more paradoxical, there are hundreds of them.

Demolishers of the “*bourgeois*” Jewish culture also turned up. Among them, the collaborators of S. Dimanstein in the European Commissariat: the S.–R. Dobkovski, Agursky (already mentioned), and also “Kantor, Shapiro, Kaplan, former emigrant anarchists who had returned from London and New York”. The objective of the Commissariat was to create a “Centre for the Jewish Communist Movement”. In August 1918, the new Communist newspaper in Yiddish *Emes* (the Truth) announced: “The proletarian revolution began in the street of the Jews”; a campaign was immediately launched against the *Heders* and the “Talmud-Torah”… In June 1919, countersigned by S. Agursky and Stalin, the dissolution of the Central Bureau of the Jewish Communities was proclaimed,[86] which represented the conservative fraction of Judaism, the one that had not sided with the Bolsheviks.

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It is nonetheless true that the socialist Jews were not attracted primarily to the Bolsheviks. Now however: where were the other parties, what had become of them? What allowed the Bolshevik Party to occupy an exclusive position was the disintegration of the old Jewish political parties. The Bund, the Zionist Socialists and the Zionists of the Poalei had split up and their leaders had joined the victors' camp by denying the ideals of democratic socialism—such as M. Raies, M. Froumkina-Ester, A. Weinstein, M. Litvanov.[87]

Is it possible? Even the Bund, this extremely belligerent organisation to which even Lenin's positions were not suitable, which showed itself so intransigent on the principle of the cultural and national autonomy of the Jews? Well yes, even the Bund! "After the establishment of Soviet power, the leadership of the Bund in Russia split into two groups (1920): the right, which in its majority, emigrated, and the left which liquidated the Bund (1921) and adhered in large part to the Bolshevik Party."[88] Among the former members of the Bund, we can cite the irremovable David Zaslavski, the one who for decades would put his pen at the service of Stalin (he would be responsible for stigmatising Mandelstam and Pasternak). Also: the Leplevski brothers, Israel and Grigori (one, from the outset, would become an agent of the Cheka and stay there for the rest of his life, the other would occupy a high position in the NKVD in 1920, then would be Deputy Commissar of the People, President of the Small Sovnarkom of the RSFSR, then Deputy Attorney General of the USSR (1934–39); he would be a victim of repression in 1939. Solomon Kotliar, immediately promoted First Secretary of Orthbourg, of Vologda, of Tver, of the regional Committee of Orel. Or also Abram Heifets: he returned to Russia after February 1917, joined the Presidium of the Bund's Main Committee in Ukraine, was a member of the Central Committee of the Bund; in October 1917, he was already for the Bolsheviks and, in 1919, he figured in the leading group of the Comintern.[89]

To the leftists of the Bund joined the left of the Zionist Socialists and the SERP[*]; those entered the Communist Party as early as 1919. The left wing of the Poalei–Tsion did the same in 1921.[90] In 1926, according to an internal census, there were up to 2,500 former members of the Bund in the Party. It goes without saying that many, later on, fell under the blade: "Under Stalin, the majority of them were victims of ferocious persecutions."[91]

Biekerman exclaims: "The Bund, which had assumed the role of representative of the Jewish working masses, joined the Bolsheviks in its most important and active part."[92]

In his memoirs, David Azbel tries to explain the reasons for this accession by reflecting on the example of his uncle, Aron Isaakievich Weinstein, an influential member of the Bund that we mentioned above: "He had understood before all others that his Party, as well as the other socialist parties, were condemned… He had understood also another thing: to survive and continue to defend the interests of the Jews would be possible only by joining the Bolsheviks."[93]

For how many of them the reasons 1) survive, 2) continue to defend the interests of the Jews, were decisive? Tentatively, both objectives were achieved.

It will note also that after October the other socialist parties, the S.–R. and the Mensheviks, who, as we know, had a large number of Jews in their ranks and at their heads, did not stand up against Bolshevism either. Scarcely aware of the fact that the Bolsheviks had dismissed this Constituent Assembly which they had called for, they withdrew, hesitated, divided themselves in their turn, sometimes proclaiming their neutrality in the civil war, other times their intention to temporise. As for the S.–R., they downright opened to the Bolsheviks a portion of the Eastern front and tried to demoralise the rear of the Whites.

But we also find Jews among the leaders of the resistance to the Bolsheviks in 1918: out of the twenty-six signatures of the "Open Letter of Prisoners on the Affair of the Workers' Congress" written at Taganka Prison, no less of a quarter are Jewish.[94] The Bolsheviks were pitiless towards the Mensheviks of this kind. In the summer of 1918, R. Abramovich, an important Menshevik leader, avoided execution only by means of a letter addressed to Lenin from an Austrian prison by Friedrich Adler, the one who had shot down the Austrian Prime Minister in 1916 and who had been reprieved. Others, too, were stoic: Grigori Binshtok, Semyon Weinstein; arrested several times, they were eventually

expelled from the country.[95]

In February 1921, in Petrograd, the Mensheviks certainly supported the deceived and hungry workers, they pushed them to protest and strike—but without any real conviction. And they lacked audacity to take the lead of the Kronstadt insurrection. However, this did not in any way protect them from repression.

We also know a lot of Mensheviks who joined the Bolsheviks, who exchanged one party label for another. They were: Boris Maguidov (he became head of the political section in the 10th Army, then Donbass, secretary of the provincial committees of Poltava, Samara, instructor on the Central Committee): Abram Deborine, a true defector (he rapidly climbed the echelons of a career of "red professor", stuffing our heads with Dialectical Materialism and Historical Materialism…); Alexander Goikhbarg (member of the Soviet Revolutionary Committee, public prosecutor at the trial of the ministers of Kolchak, member of the college of the Commissariat for Justice, then president of the Little Sovnarkom). Some of them held out for some time until their arrest, such as I. Liakhovetski–Maïski[96]; the others, in great numbers, were reduced very early to silence, from the trial of the imaginary "Unified Menshevik Bureau" of 1931 (where we find Guimmer–Sukhanov who was the designer of the tactics of the Executive Committee in March 1917.) A huge raid was organised throughout the Union to apprehend them.

There were defectors in the S.–R.: Lakov Lifchitz, for example, vice-president of the Chernigov Cheka in 1919, then Kharkov, then president of the Kiev Cheka and, at the height of a rapid career, vice-president of the Ukrainian GPU. There was anarchist communists, the most famous being Lazar Kogan (Special Section of the Armies, Assistant to the Chief of the Army of the Vecheka in 1930—senior official of the Gulag and, in 1931, chief of the White Sea shipyard of the NKVD). There are extremely sinuous biographies: Ilya Kit–Viitenko, a lieutenant in the Austrian army, taken prisoner by the Russians, and from the moment the Bolsheviks are in power, takes his ranks at the Cheka–Guepeou and then in the army and, in the 1930s, was one of the reformers of the Red Army. And then in the hole for twenty years![97]

And what about the Zionists? Let us remember: in 1906 they had posited and proclaimed that they could not stay away from the Russians' fight against the yoke of the Autocracy, and they had actively engaged in the said battle. This did not prevent them, in May 1918 (when the yoke still weighed so heavily), to declare that, in matters of Russian domestic policy, they would henceforth be neutral, "very obviously in the hope of avoiding the risk" that the Bolsheviks "would accuse them of being counter-revolutionaries."[98] And at first—it worked. Throughout the year 1918 and during the first six months of 1919, the Bolsheviks left them alone: in the summer of 1918 they were able to hold the All-Russian Congress of Jewish Communities in Moscow, and hundreds of these Communities had their "Palestinian Week"; their newspapers appeared freely and a youth club, the "Heraluts"[99], was created.—But in the spring of 1919 local authorities undertook to ban the Zionist press here and there, and in the autumn of 1919 a few prominent figures were accused of "espionage for the benefit of England". In the spring of 1920, the Zionists organised a Pan-Russian Conference in Moscow. Result: all the participants (90 people) were interned in the Butyrka prison; some were condemned, but the penalty was not applied, following the intervention of a delegation of Jewish syndicates from America. "The Vecheka presidium declared that the Zionist organisation was counter-revolutionary, and its activity was now forbidden in Soviet Russia… From this moment began the era of clandestinity for the Zionists."[100]

M. Heifets, who is a thoughtful man, reminds us very well of this: did the October coup not coincide exactly with the Balfour declaration which laid the foundations of an independent Jewish state? Well, what happened?: "A part of the new Jewish generation followed the path of Herzl and Jabotinsky, while the other [let us precise: the biggest] yielded to temptation and swelled the ranks of the Lenin–Trotsky–Stalin band." (Exactly what Churchill feared.) "Herzl's way then appeared distant, unreal, while that of Trotsky and Bagritsky enabled the Jews to gain immediate stature and immediately become a nation in Russia, equal in right and even privileged."[101]

Also defector, of course, and not least, Lev Mekhlis, of the Poalei–Tsion. His career is well known: in Stalin's secretariat, in the editorial board of the *Pravda*, at the head of the Red Army's political sector, in the State Defence Commissariat and Commissioner of State Control. It was he who made our landing in Crimea in 1942 fail. At the height of his career: in the Orgburo of the Central Committee. His ashes are sealed in the wall of the Kremlin.[102]

Of course, there was an important part of the Jews of Russia who did not adhere to Bolshevism: neither the rabbis, the lecturers, nor the great doctors, nor a whole mass of good people, fell into the arms of the Bolsheviks. Tyrkova writes in the same passage in her book, a few lines later: “This predominance of the Jews among the Soviet leaders put to despair those of the Russian Jews who, despite the cruel iniquities suffered under the tsarist regime, regarded Russia as the Motherland and led the common life of all Russian intelligentsia, refusing, in communion with her, any collaboration with the Bolsheviks.”[103]—But at the time they had no opportunity of making themselves heard publicly, and these pages are naturally filled not with their names, but with those of the conquerors, those who have bridled the course of events.

Two illustrious terrorist acts perpetrated by Jewish arms against the Bolsheviks in 1918 occupy a special place: the assassination of Uritsky by Leonid Kannegisser, and the attack on Lenin by Fanny Kaplan. Here too, though the other way around, was expressed the vocation of the Jewish people to be always among the first. Perhaps the blows fired at Lenin were rather the result of S.–R. intentions[*]. But, as for Kannegisser (born of hereditary nobility by his grandfather, he entered the School of Officer Cadets in 1917; by the way, he was in friendly relations with Sergei Yesenin), I admit full well Mark Aldanov’s explanation: in the face of the Russian people and History, he was moved by the desire to oppose the names of Uritsky and Zinoviev with another Jewish name. This is the feeling he expresses in a note transmitted to his sister on the eve of the attack, in which he says he wants to avenge the peace of Brest-Litovsk, that he is ashamed to see the Jews contribute to install the Bolsheviks in power, and also avenge the execution of his companion of the School of artillery at the Cheka of Petrograd.

It should be noted, however, that recent studies have revealed that these two attacks were perpetrated under suspicious circumstances.[104] There is strong presumption that Fanny Kaplan did not shoot Lenin at all, but was apprehended “to close the case”: a convenient culprit, by chance. There is also a hypothesis that the Bolshevik authorities themselves would have created the necessary conditions for Kannegisser to fire his shot. This I strongly doubt: for what provocation would the Bolsheviks have sacrificed their beloved child, president of the Cheka? One thing, however, is troubling: how is it that later, in full Red Terror, when was attained by force of arms, through the entire country, thousands of innocent hostages, totally unconnected with the affair, the whole Kannegisser family was freed from prison and allowed to emigrate… We do not recognise here the Bolshevik claw! Or would it be the intervention of a very long arm to the highest ranking Soviet instances?—A recent publication tells us that the relatives and friends of L. Kannegisser had even drawn up an armed attack plan against the Cheka of Petrograd to free their prisoner, and that all, as soon as they were arrested, were released and remained in Petrograd without being disturbed. Such clemency on the part of the Bolshevik authorities may be explained by their concern to avoid ill feelings with the influential Jewish circles in Petrograd. The Kannegisser family had kept its Judaic faith and Leonid’s mother, Rosalia Edouardovna, declared during an interrogation that her son had fired on Uritsky because he “had turned away from Judaism.”[105]

But here is a Jewish name that has not yet obtained the deserved celebrity: Alexander Abramovich Vilenkin, hero of the clandestine struggle against the Bolsheviks. He was a volunteer in the hussars at the age of seventeen, in 1914, he was decorated four times with the Cross of Saint George, promoted to officer, then, on the eve of the revolution, he became captain of cavalry; in 1918, he joined the clandestine organisation Union for the Defence of the Homeland and of Liberty; he was apprehended by the Cheka at the time when, as the organisation had been discovered, he was delaying the destruction of compromising documents. Focused, intelligent, energetic, uncompromising towards the Bolsheviks, he infused in others the spirit of resistance. Executed by the Bolsheviks—it goes without saying. (The information about him came to us from his comrade-in-arms in the underground in 1918, and also from his cellmate in 1919, Vasily Fyodorovich Klementiev, captain in the Russian army.[106])

These fighters against Bolshevism, whatever their motivations, we venerate their memory as Jews. We regret that they were so few, as were too few the White forces during the civil war.

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A very prosaic and entirely new phenomenon reinforced the victory of the Bolsheviks. These occupied important

positions, from which many advantages resulted, notably the enjoyment in both capitals of “vacant” apartments freed by their owners, “former aristocrats”, now on the run. In these apartments could live a whole tributary flock of the former Pale of Settlement. This was a real “exodus”! G. A. Landau writes: “The Jews have climbed the stairs of power and occupied a few ‘summits’… From there, it is normal that they brought (as they do everywhere, in any environment) their relatives, friends, companions from their youth… A perfectly natural process: the granting of functions to people who are known, trusted, protected, or simply begging for your favours. This process multiplied the number of Jews in the Soviet state apparatus.”[107] We will not say how many Zinoviev’s wife, Lilina, thus brought parents and relatives, nor how Zinoviev distributed positions to his ‘own’. They are the focus, but the influx, not to have been noticed at the moment, was enormous and concerns tens of thousands of people. The people transmigrated en masse from Odessa to Moscow. (Is it known that Trotsky himself gratified his father, whom he moderately loved, of a Sovkhoz in the suburbs of Moscow?)

These migrations can be followed throughout biographies. So that of David (not to be confused with Mark) Azbel. In 1919, still a kid, he left Chemigov where he was born to come to Moscow where his two aunts already lived. He first lived in the house of one of them, Ida, “a wealthy merchant of the First Guild”, whose husband had returned from America, and then with the other, Liolia, who was housed in the First House of the Soviets (The National) with all the best of the Soviet Union. Their neighbour Ulrich, who would later become famous, said jokingly: “Why don’t we open a synagogue in the National where only Jews live?” A whole Soviet elite then left Saint Petersburg to settle in the Second House of the Soviets (the Metropolis), in the Third (the Seminary, Bojedomski Street), in the Fourth (Mokhovaya / Vozdvijenka street) and in the Fifth (Cheremetievski street). These tenants received from a special distribution centre abundant parcels: “Caviar, cheese, butter, smoked sturgeon were never lacking on their table” (we are in 1920). “Everything was special, designed especially for the new elite: kindergartens, schools, clubs, libraries.” (In 1921–22, the year of the murderous famine on the Volga and the help of TARA[*], in their “model school, the canteen was fed by the ARA foundation and served American breakfasts: rice pudding, hot chocolate, white bread, and fried eggs.”) And “no one remembered that, the day before, it was vociferated in the classrooms that the *bourgeois* should be hung high on the lantern.” “The children of the neighbouring houses hated those of the ‘Soviet Houses’ and, at the first opportunity, went after them.”

The NEP came. The tenants of the National then moved into cosy apartments or pavilions that had previously belonged to aristocrats or *bourgeois*. In 1921: “spend the summer in Moscow, where you suffocate?”, no, you are invited to an old mansion, now confiscated, in the outskirts of Moscow. There, “everything is in the state, as in the days of the former owners”… except that high fences are erected around these houses, that guards are posted at the entrance… Wives of the commissioners began to frequent the best spas of the West. We see the development, owed to the scarcity of food, of misery and the concealment of foodstuffs, a second-hand trade and a whole traffic of goods. “Having bought for peanuts an entire lot of commodities from emigrating merchants, Aunt Ida and Uncle Micha sold them under the table” and thus became “probably the richest people in all of Moscow.”—However, in 1926 they were sentenced to five years’ imprisonment for “economic counter-revolution”, to which were added, at the end of the NEP, ten years of camp.[108]

Let us also quote: “When the Bolsheviks became ‘the government’, all sorts of individuals from the Jewish sub-proletariat joined them, wishing to get their share.”[109]—And as free trade and private enterprise were forbidden, many Jewish families saw their daily lives greatly modified: “The middle-aged people were mostly deprived, while the younger ones, rid of all spiritual ‘ballast’, by having social careers, were able to maintain their elders… Hence the excessive number of Jews in the Soviet state apparatus.” Note: the author does not justify this process by calling it a “unique issue”, but he notes with grief the aspect that counts: “This destructive process did not meet the resistance it would have required in the Jewish milieu,” on the contrary, it found there “voluntary executants and a climate of sympathy.”[110]

It is thus that many Jews entered the Soviet ruling class.

But could this process, however occult as it was, go unnoticed by the disadvantaged Russian social strata?

And how could the man in the street react? Either by jeers: “Rosa of the Sovnarkhoz”, “the husband of Khaïka of

the Cheka". Or by funny stories, from those that flooded Russia as early as 1918: "Vyssotski tea, Brodsky sugar, Trotsky Russia." And, in Ukraine, it gave: "Hop! Harvest Workers / All Jews are bosses!"

And they began to whisper a new slogan: "The Soviets without the Jews!"

The co-authors of the book of *Russia and the Jews* became alarmed in 1924: it is clear that "not all Jews are Bolsheviks and all Bolsheviks are not Jews, but there is no need today to prove the zealous participation of the Jews in the martyrdom imposed on an exsanguinate Russia by the Bolsheviks. What we must, on the contrary, is try to elucidate in a calm manner how this work of destruction was refracted in the consciousness of the Russian people. The Russians had never seen any Jews in command before."[111]

They now saw them today at every step. Invested with a ferocious and unlimited power.

"To answer the question of Judaism's responsibility in the emergence of Bolshevik Jews, we must first consider the psychology of non-Jews, that of all these Russians who suffer directly from the atrocities committed… The Jewish actors of public life who wish to prevent any new bloody tragedy, to save the Jews of Russia from new pogroms, must take account of this fact."[112] We must "understand the psychology of the Russians who suddenly found themselves under the authority of an evil, arrogant, rude, self-confident and impudent brood."[113]

It is not for the purpose of settling accounts that we must remember History. Nor to reassume mutual accusations. But to understand how, for example, it was possible for important layers of a perfectly correct Jewish society to have tolerated an enormous participation of Jews in the rise (1918) of a State that was not only insensitive to the Russian people, foreign to Russian history, but which, moreover, inflicted on the population all the outbursts of *terror*.

The presence of Jews alongside the Bolsheviks raises questions *not because* it would induce a foreign origin to this power. When we speak of the abundance of Jewish names in revolutionary Russia, we paint a picture of nothing new: how many Germanic and Baltic names have figured, for a century and a half to two centuries, in The tsarist administration? The real question is: in what direction did this power work?

D. S. Pasmanik, however, gives us this reflection: "Let all the Russians who are capable of reflecting ask themselves whether Bolshevism, even with Lenin at its head, would have triumphed if there had been in Soviet Russia a satisfied and educated peasantry owning land? Could all the 'Sages of Zion' gathered together, even with a Trotsky at their head, be able to bring about the great chaos in Russia?"[114] He is right: they could never have done so.

But the first to ask the question should be the Jews more than the Russians. This episode of History should call out to them today. The question of the mass participation of the Jews in the Bolshevik administration and the atrocities committed by the Jews should be elucidated in a spirit of far-sighted analysis of History. It is not admissible to evade the question by saying: it was the scum, the renegades of Judaism, we do not have to answer for them.

D. S. Chturmann is right to remind me of my own remarks about the communist leaders of any nation: "they have all turned away from their people and poured into the inhuman."[115] I believe it. But Pasmanik, was right to write in the 20s: "We cannot confine ourselves to saying that the Jewish people do not answer for the acts committed by one or the other of its members. We answer for Trotsky as long as we have not dissociated ourselves from him."[116] Now, to dissociate oneself does not mean to turn away, on the contrary, it means rejecting *actions*, to the end, and learning from them.

I have studied Trotsky's biography extensively, and I agree that he did not have any specifically Jewish attachments, but was rather a fanatical internationalist. Does this mean that a compatriot like him is easier to incriminate than the others? But as soon as his star rose, in the autumn of 1917, Trotsky became, for far too many people, a subject of pride, and for the radical left of the Jews of America, a true idol.

What can I say of America? But of everywhere else as well! There was a young man in the camp where I was interned in the 50s, Vladimir Gershuni, a fervent socialist, an internationalist, who had kept a full conscience of his Jewishness; I saw him again in the 60s after our release, and he gave me his notes. I read there that Trotsky was the

Prometheus of October for the sole reason that he was Jewish: “He was a Prometheus not because he was born such, but because he was a child of the Prometheus-people, this people, who, if it was not attached to the rock of obtuse wickedness by the chains of a patent and latent hostility, would have done much more than he did for the good of humanity.”

“All historians who deny the participation of Jews in the revolution tend not to recognise in these Jews their national character. Those, on the contrary, and especially Israeli historians, who see Jewish hegemony as a victory of the Judaic spirit, those ones exalt their belonging to Jewishness.”[117]

It was as early as the 20s, when the civil war ended, that arguments were made to exonerate the Jews. I. O. Levin reviews them in the collection *Russia and the Jews* (the Bolshevik Jews were not so numerous as that… there is no reason why a whole people should respond to the acts of a few…, The Jews were persecuted in tsarist Russia…, during the civil war the Jews had to flee the pogroms by seeking refuge with the Bolsheviks, etc.), and he rejected them by arguing that it was not a matter of criminal responsibility, which is always individual, but a *moral* responsibility.[118]

Pasmanik thought it impossible to be relieved of a moral responsibility, but he consoled himself by saying: “Why should the mass of the Jewish people answer for the turpitudes of certain commissioners? It is profoundly unjust. However, to admit that there is a collective responsibility for the Jews is to recognise the existence of a Jewish nation of its own. From the moment when the Jews cease to be a nation, from the day when they are Russians, Germans, Englishmen of Judaic confession, it is then that they will shake off the shackles of collective responsibility.”[119]

Now, the twentieth century has rightly taught us to recognise the Hebrew nation as such, with its anchorage in Israel. And the collective responsibility of a people (of the Russian people too, of course) is inseparable from its capacity to build a morally worthy life.

Yes, they are abounding, the arguments that explain why the Jews stood by the Bolsheviks (and we will discuss others, very solid, when we talk about the civil war). Nevertheless, if the Jews of Russia remember this period only to justify themselves, it will mean that the level of their national consciousness has fallen, that this consciousness will have lost itself.

The Germans could also challenge their responsibility for the Nazi period by saying: they were not real Germans, they were the dregs of society, they did not ask for our opinion… But this people answers for its past even in its ignominious periods. How to respond? By endeavouring to conscientise it, to understand it: how did such a thing happen? Where lies *our* fault? Is there a danger that this will happen again?

It is in this spirit that the Jewish people must respond to their revolutionary assassins as well as the columns of well-disposed individuals who put themselves at their service. It is not a question here of answering before other peoples, but before oneself, before one’s conscience and before God. As we Russians must answer, both for the pogroms, and our incendiary peasants, insensible to all pity, and for our red soldiers who have fallen into madness, and our sailors transformed into wild beasts. (I have spoken of them with enough depth, I believe, in *The Red Wheel*, and I will add an example here: the Red Guard A. R. Bassov, in charge of escorting Shingaryov[*]—this man passionate of justice, a popular intercessor—, began by collecting money from the sister of the prisoner—as a tip and to finance his transfer from the Peter and Paul fortress to the Mariinski hospital—and a few hours later, in the same night, he leads to the hospital some sailors who coldly shoot down Shingaryov and Kokochkine.[**120] In this individual—so many homegrown traits!!)

Answer, yes, as one answers for a member of one’s family.

For if we are absolved of all responsibility for the actions of our compatriots, it is the very notion of nation which then loses all true meaning.

Footnotes

1. SJE, t. 7, p. 399.
2. *D. S. Pasmanik*, Rousskaia revolioutsiia i evreistvo (Bolchevism i ioudaism) [The Russian Revolution and the Jews {Bolshevism and Judaism}], Paris, 1923, p. 155.
3. *S. Gringaouz*, Evreiskaya natsionalnaia avtonomiia v Litve i drougikh stranakh Pribaltiki [Jewish national self-government in Lithuania and the other Baltic countries]—BJWR-2, p. 46.
4. SJE, t. 2, p. 312.
5. Izvestia, 12 Oct. 1920, p. 1.
6. *V. Lenin*, O evreiskom voprosis v Rossii [On the Jewish Question in Russia]. Preface by S. Dimanstein, M., Proletarii, 1924, pp. 17–18.
7. *Leonard Schapiro*, The Role of the Jews in the Russian Revolutionary Movement, in The Slavonic and East European Review, vol. 40, London, Athlone Press, 1961–62, p. 164.
8. *M. Kheifets*, Nashi obschiie ouroki [Our lessons]—"22", no. 14, p. 62.
9. Jewish Tribune, Weekly, Number dedicated to the interests of Russian Jews, Paris, 1923, September 7, p. 1.
10. *D. Schub*, Evrei vrusskoï revolioutsii [The Jews in the Russian Revolution]—BJWR-2, p. 142.
11. *Iou. Larine*, Evrei i antisemitizn v SSSR [The Jews and anti-Semitism in the USSR], M., L., *Giz*, 1929, pp. 260–262.
12. *D. S. Pasmanik*, Tchevo my dobyvaemsia? [What are we looking for?]—RaJ, p. 212.
13. American Hebrew, Sept. 10, 1920, p. 507.
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15. *M. Agursky*, Ideologuia natsional-bolchevisma [The ideology of National-Bolshevism], Paris, YMCA Press, 1980, p. 264.
16. *S. Tsyroulnikov*, SSSR, evrei i Israil [The USSR, the Jews, and Israel]—TN, no. 96, p. 155.
17. *L. Schapiro, op. cit.*, pp. 164–165.
18. *M. Agursky*, p. 264.
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20. *Roheri Conquest*, Bolshoi terror [The Great Terror], trans. from English "The Great Terror", London, 1968, French trans., Paris, 1968.
21. Den, 1917, December 5, p. 2.
22. *S. S. Maslov*, Rossiia posle tchetyriokh let revolioutsii (Russia after four years of revolution), Paris, Rousskaya petchat, 1922, book 2, p. 190
23. *S. E. Troubetskoi*, Minovchee [The Past], Paris, YMCA Press, 1989, pp. 195–196, coll. The Library of Russian Memoirs (LRM); Series: Our recent past, fasc. 10.
24. Ruskaya Uolia [The Russian Will], 1917, 8 July, evening delivery, p. 4.
25. Bolsheviki: Dokoumenty po istorii bolchevizma s 1903 in 1916 god byvch. Moskovskogo Okhrannogo Otdeleniia [The Bolsheviks: Materials for the history of Bolshevism from 1903 to 1916 from the former Moscow Okhrana]. Presented by M. A. Tsiavlovski, supplemented by A. M. Serebriannikov, New York, Telex, 1990, p. 318.
26. SJE, t. 5, p. 476.
27. SJE, t. 6, p. 124.
28. RJE (2nd edition revised and completed), t. 1, p. 267.
29. Nijegorodski Partarkhiv [Archives of the Nizhny Novgorod Party], f. 1, op. 1, file 66, leaflets 3, 12, etc.
30. *Larine*, p. 258.
31. (rec) Bolchevki [The Bolsheviks], 1903–1916, p. 340; RJE, t. 1, pp. 100–101, 376, 427, 465–466; t. 2, pp. 51, 61, 321, 482; t. 3, p. 306.
32. RJE, t. 1, pp. 160, 250, 234, 483, 502, 533; t. 3, p. 260.

- According to the Julian calendar still in force in the Orthodox Church. Christmas is celebrated on January 7th.

33. Zemlia sibirskaia, dalnievostotchnaia [Siberian Land, Far East], Omsk, 1993, nos. 5–6 (May–June), pp. 35–37.
34. Izvestia, 1931, 7 April, p. 2.
35. Izvestia, 1928, 6 March, p. 5; RJE, t. 2, pp. 295–296.
36. *Iv. Najivine*, Zapiski o revolioutsii [Notes on the Revolution]. Vienna, 1921, p. 93.
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38. *G. Aronson*, Evreiskaya obschestvennost v Rossii v 1917–1918 gg. [The Jewish Public Opinion in Russia in 1917–1918], SJE-2, 1968, p. 16.
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41. *Mikhail Heifets*, Tsareoubiistvo v 1918 godou [The Assassination of the Tsar in 1918], Moscow-Jerusalem, 1991, pp. 246–247, 258, 268–271.
42. *Ibidem*, p. 355.
43. *Ibidem*, pp. 246, 378–380.

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46. Izvestia, 1918, 27 July, p. 4.
47. *Iou. Larine*, p. 259.
48. *V. I. Lenin*, O evreiskom voprose v Rossii [On the Jewish Question in Russia], preface by S. Dimanstein. M., Proletarii, 1924, 3 July.
49. SJE, t. 4, p. 766.
50. Tserkovnye Vedomosti [News of the Church], 1918, no. 1 (quoted according to M. Agursky, p. 10)
51. Pravda, 1919, 3 July.
52. Sledstvennoe delo Patriarkha Tikhona [The instruction of Patriarch Tikhon], rec. of documents from the materials of the Central Archives, M., 2000, doc. no. 58, pp. 600–604.
53. GARF, f. 130, op. 4, ed. Khr. 94, l. 1, Minutes of the meeting of the Small Council of 2 Sept. 1920, no. 546.
54. GARF, f. 1235, op. 56, d. 26, l. 43.
55. *S. S. Maslov*, p. 43.
56. Arch. Sergui Bulgakov Khristianstvo i evreiskii vopros [Christianity and the Jewish Question], rec, Paris, YMCA Press, 1991, p. 76.
57. *Ibidem*, pp. 98, 121, 124.

- Former governing body of the Jewish Community.

58. *D. S. Pasmanik*, Rousskaia revolioutsiia i evreistvo [The Russian Revolution and the Jews], p. 156.
59. *I. M. Biekerman*, Rossiia i rousskoie evrcistvo [Russia and the Russian Jews], RaJ, p. 25.
60. Id, K samosoznaniou evreia tchem my byli. Tchem my doljny, byt [For the self-consciousness of the Jew: who have we been, who we must become], Paris, 1930, p. 42.
61. *I. M. Biekerman*, RaJ, pp. 14–15.

- Those who teach Jewish law privately.

62. *G. A. Landau*, Revolioutsionnye idei v evreiskoi obschestvennosti [The Revolutionary Ideas in Jewish Public Opinion], RaJ, p. 117.
63. *D. S. Pasmanik*, Rousskaia revolioutsiia i evreistvo [The Russian Revolution and the Jews], p. 156.
64. *D. S. Pasmanik*, p. 157.

- Obchtchestvo Pemeslennogo Troude welded evreiev: Association for craftwork among Jews.

65. *D. Choub*, Evrei v rousskoi revolioutsii [The Jews in the Russian Revolution], BJWR-2, p. 143.
66. *Chlomo Avineri*, Vozvraschenie v istoriiou [Back to the story]—"22", 1990, no. 73, p. 112.
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68. *I. O. Levine*, Evrei v revolioutsii [The Jews in the Revolution], RaJ, p. 127.
69. *Landau*, RaJ, p. 109.
70. *D. O. Linski*, O natsionalnom samosoznanii rousskogo evreia [The National Consciousness of the Russian Jew], RaJ, pp. 145, 146.
71. *D. S. Pasmanik*, RaJ, p. 225.
72. *D. S. Pasmanik*, Rousskaia revolioutsiia i evreistvo [The Russian Revolution and Judaism], p. 129.
73. Jewish Chronicle, 28 March 1919, p. 10.
74. *Ibidem*, 4 April 1919, p. 7.
75. *Biekerman*, RaJ, p. 34.
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77. *Levine*, RaJ, pp. 125, 126.
78. *Norman Podgorets*, Evrei v sovremennom mire [The Jews in the Modern World] (Int.) BM, no. 86, p. 113.
79. *A. Sutton*, Orol strit i bolshevitskaya revolioutsiia, [Wall Street and the Bolshevik Revolution], trans. from the English, M., 1998, pp. 141–142.
80. *Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams*, From Liberty to Brest–Litovsk London, Macmillan and Co., 1919, pp. 297–299.
81. *Overmen*, pp. 22–23, 26–27.
82. Jerry Muller, Dialektika traguedii antisemitizm i kommounizm v Tsentralnoï i Vostotchnoï Evrope, Evreiskaya Tribouna* (The Jewish Tribune), 1920, no. 10, p. 3.

- This is the character of *Man's Fate* by Andre Malraux.
    83. RJE, t. 1, p. 154.
    - Collaborator of the collection *From Under the Rubble*, published by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn in 1974.

84. *Ibidem*, p. 22.

85. *Chaim Potok*, The Gates of November, Chronicles of the Slepak Family, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1996, pp. 37, 44–45.
86. *G. Aronson*, Evreiski vopros v epokhou Stalina [The Jewish Question in Stalin's Era], BJWR, pp. 133–134.
87. *Ibidem*, pp. 135–136.
88. SJE, t. 1, p. 560.
89. RJE, t. 1, p. 478; t. 2, pp. 78, 163; t.3, p. 286.

- Sotsial–evreiskaya raborchaya partia: Jewish Social Workers Party.

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91. SJE, t. 1, p. 560.
92. *I. M. Biekerman*, RaJ, p. 44.
93. *D. Azbel*, Do, vo vremia i posle [Avant, pendant et après], VM, 1989, no. 104, p. 231.
94. Nezavisimoie rabotcheie dvijeniie v 1918 godou: Dokumenty i materialy [The independent workers' movement], established by M. Bernstam, Paris, YMCA Press, 1981, pp. 291–293, in Research on Contemporary Russian History.
95. RJE, t. 1, pp. 135–136, 199–200.
96. RJE, t. 1, pp. 331, 419; t. 2, pp. 221–222, 230.
97. RJE, t. 2, pp. 36, 51–52, 176.
98. *I. B. Shekhtman*, Sovetskaia Rossiia, Sionizm i Izrail [Soviet Russia, Zionism, and Israel], BJWR-2, p. 31.
99. *Ibidem*, p. 315.
100. *S. Hepshtein*, Rousskie sionisty v barbe za Palestinou [The Russian Zionists in the Fight for Palestine], BJWR-2, pp. 390–392.
101. *Heifets*, "22", 1980, no. 14, p. 162.
102. RJE, t. 2, pp. 276–277.
103. *Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams, op. cit.*, p. 299.

- Party of Socialists Revolutionaries (S–R.).

104. *B. Orlov*, Mif o Fanni Kaplan [The Myth of Fanny Kaplan], ME, 1975, no. 2; G. Nilov. Ouritski, Voldarski, and others, Strana i Mir, Munich, 1989, no. 6.
105. *Nikolaï Koniaev*, On oubival, slovno pisal stikhotvorenic [He killed as he would have written verses], Don, pp. 241, 250–252.
106. *V. F. Klementiev*, V bolchevitskoï Moskve: 1918–1920 [In the Moscow of the Bolsheviks], M., Rousski Pout (Russian Memories, series: Our close past, book 3).
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- American Relief Administration (1919–1923) the Hoover commission rescued the victims of the 1922 famine in Russia.

108. *D. Azbel*, ME, 1989, no. 104, pp. 192–196, 199, 203, 209, 223, 225–226.
109. *V. S. Mandel*, RaJ, p. 200.
110. *Landau*, RaJ, pp. 111–112.
111. *I. M. Biekerman*, RaJ, p. 22.
112. *D. S. Pasmanik*, RaJ, p. 212.
113. *D. S. Pasmanik*, Rousskaia revolioutsia i evreistvo [The Russian Revolution and Judaism], p. 200.
114. *Ibidem*, p. 157.
115. *Dora Chturmann*, Gorodou i mirou [Urbi and orbi], Paris–New York, Third Wave, 1988, p. 357.
116. *D. S. Pasmanik*, Rousskaia revolioutsia i evreistvo [The Russian Revolution and Judaism], p. 11.
117. Sonja Margolina. Das Ende der Lügen: Russland und die Juden im 20 Jahrhundert [The End of Lies: Russia and the Jews in the 20th Century], Berlin, Siedler Verlag, 1992, pp. 99–100.
118. *I. O. Levine*, RaJ, p. 123.
119. *D. S. Pasmanik*, p. 198.

- 1869–1918; Publicist, physician, one of the cadet leaders (K.D.). Deputy in the Duma in 1917, shot dead by the terrorists.
    - 1871–1918, jurist, leader of the Cadet party, deputy in the Duma in 1917, also shot down by the terrorists.

120. *A. I. Chingariova*, postface to Dnevnik A. Chingariova. Kak eto bylo: Petropavloskaia krepost [Journal of the fortress Peter and Paul, 27 Nov. 1917–5 Jan. 1918], 2nd ed., M., 1918, pp. 66–68.

Chapter 16: During the Civil War

Trotsky once boasted that during the Civil War, "even" traveling in his special Revvoyensovet's [Revolutionary Military Council] railroad coach, he was able to find time to acquaint himself with the latest works of French literature.

Not that he realized exactly *what* he said. He acknowledged that he was able to find not just time, but room in his heart between appeals to the "revolutionary sailors," forcibly mobilized units of Red Army, and a thrown order to execute every tenth soldier in a unit that wavered in battle. Well, he usually did not stay around to supervise *carrying out* such orders.

Orchestrating a bloody war on the vast plains of Russia, he was absolutely untouched by the unprecedented sufferings of her inhabitants, by her pain. He soared aloft, above it all, on the wings of the international intoxication of the Revolution.

The February Revolution was a *Russian* revolution: no matter how headlong, erroneous and pernicious it was, it did not aspire to *burn down* the entire pre-existing life, to annihilate the whole pre-revolutionary Russia. Yet immediately after the October [Bolshevik revolution], the Revolution spilled abroad and became an *international* and devastating plague, feeding itself by devouring and destroying social order wherever it spread — everything built was to be annihilated; everything cultivated — to be confiscated; whoever resisted — to be shot. The Reds were exclusively preoccupied with their grand social experiment, predestined to be repeated, expanded and implemented all over the world.

From an easy, quick blow, the October coup snowballed into a fierce three-year-long Civil War, which brought countless bloody calamities to all the peoples of Russia.

The multinationality of the former Empire and the cannon recoil from the Great War complicated both the inhumane Bolshevik plot and its implementation. Unlike the French Revolution, which unfolded on the territory of mono-national France and did not see much foreign intervention apart from a short incursion of hostile troops, and with all its horrors being a national affair from beginning to end, the Russian Revolution was horribly aggravated by its multinational madness. It saw the strong participation of Red Latvians (then Russian subjects), former German and Austrian prisoners of war (organized into full-blown regiments like the Hungarians), and even large numbers of Chinese. No doubt the brunt of the fighting for the Reds was carried out by Russians; some of them were drafted on pain of death while others volunteered in a mad belief they would be fighting for a happy future for themselves. Yet the Russian Jews were not lost in all that diversity.

The politically active part of Russian Jewry, which backed the Bolshevik civic regime in 1917, now just as boldly stepped into the military structures of Bolsheviks. During the first years after the October Revolution in the midst of the internationalist frenzy, the power over this enormous land was effortlessly slipping into the hands of those clinging to the Bolsheviks. And they were overwhelmed by the newfound immensity of that power. They immediately began using it without a backward glance or any fear of control — some, without doubt, in the name of higher ideals, while others — in the name of lower ones ("obstinacy of fanaticism in some and ability to adapt in others"[1]). At that time, nobody could imagine that

the Civil War would ignite enormous Jewish pogroms, unprecedented in their atrocity and bloodshed, all over the South of Russia.

We can judge the true nature of the multi-ethnic war from the Red pogrom during the suppression of the Kronstadt Uprising in March 1921. A well-known socialist-revolutionary and sociologist Pitrim Sorokin writes: "For three days, Latvian, Bashkir, Hungarian, Tatar, Russian, Jewish and international rabble, crazed by alcohol and the smell of blood, raped and killed without restraint."[2]

Or here is another recollection from ordinary witnesses. During the feast of the Epiphany in 1918, an Orthodox Sacred Procession stirred forth from the gates of the Kremlin in Tula – and an "international squad" gunned it down.

Even with the ruthless international squads, the force of the "Red Guard" alone was no longer sufficient. The Bolshevik regime needed a regular army. In 1918, "Lev Trotsky, with the help of Sklyansky and Jacov Sverdlov, created the Red Army." "Many Jews were fighting in its ranks. Some units were entirely Jewish, like, for example, the brigade of Josef Furman."[3] The Jewish share in the command corps the Red Army become large and influential and this trend continued for many years even after the end of the Civil War. This Jewish involvement has been researched by several Jewish authors and encyclopedias.

In the 1980s, Israeli scholar Aaron Abramovich used many Soviet sources (including *The Fifty-Year Anniversary of the Soviet Armed Forces*, *The Soviet Historical Encyclopedia*, volumes of *Directives of the Front Command of the Red Army*) to compile detailed nominal rosters of highly ranked Jewish commanders (exclusively Jewish ones) in the Red Army during the period from the Civil War up to the aftermath of Second World War.

Let's skim through the pages allocated to the Civil War.[4] This is a very extensive roster; it begins with the Revvoyensoviet, where Abramovich lists L. Trotsky, E. Sklyansky, A. Rosengoltz, and Y. Drabkin-Gusev. Trotsky ordered the "establishment of fronts with headquarters, and formation of new armies," and "Jews were present in almost all the revvoyensoviets of the fronts and armies." (Abramovich lists the most prominent individuals: D. Vayman, E. Pyatnitsky, L. Glezarov, L. Pechyorsky, I. Slavin, M. Lisovsky, G. Bitker, Bela Kun, Brilliant-Sokolnikov, I. Khodorovsky). Earlier, at the onset of the Civil War, the Extraordinary Command Staff of the Petrograd Military District was headed by Uritsky, and among the members of the Petrograd Committee of Revolutionary Defense were Sverdlov (the chairman), Volodarsky, Drabkin-Gusev, Ya. Fishman (a leftist Socialist Revolutionary) and G. Chudnovsky. In May 1918 there were two Jews among the eleven commissars of military districts: E. Yaroslavsky-Gubelman (Moscow District) and S. Nakhimson (Yaroslavsky District). During the war, several Jews were in charge of armies: M. Lashevich was in charge of the 3rd — and later, of the 7th Army of Eastern Front; V. Lazarevich was in charge of the 3rd Army of the Western Front, G. Sokolnikov led the 8th Army of the Southern Front, N. Sorkin – the 9th, and I. Yakir – the 14th Army. Abramovich painstakingly lists numerous Jewish heads of staff and members of the revvoyensoviets in each of the twenty armies; then the commanders, heads of staff and military commissars of divisions (the list of the latter, i.e., those in charge of the ideological branch of command, was three-times longer than the list of Jewish commanders of divisions). In this manner Abramovich describes brigades, regiments and separate detachments. He lists Jewish heads of political administrations and revolutionary

military tribunals at all levels, noting that "especially large percentage of Jews can be found among political officers at all levels of the Red Army…." "Jews played an important role in the provision and supply services. Let's name some of them…." "Jews occupied important positions in military medicine as well: heads of sanitary administrations of the fronts and armies, senior doctors of units and bodies of troops…." "Many Jews — commanders of large units and detachments — were distinguished for their courage, heroism and generalship" but "due to the synoptic character of this chapter we cannot provide detailed descriptions of the accomplishments of Jewish Red Army soldiers, commanders and political officers." (Meticulously listing the commanders of armies, the researcher misses another Jew, Tikhon Khvesin, who happened to be in charge of the 4th Army of the Eastern Front, then — of the 8th Army of the Southern Front, and later of the 1st Army of the Turkestan Front.[5])

The *Russian Jewish Encyclopedia* provides additional information about some commanders. (Here I would like to commend this encyclopedia (1994), for in our new free times its authors performed an honest choice — writing frankly about everything, including less than honorable things.)

Drabkin-Gusev became the Head of Political Administration of the Red Army and the Chief of the entire Red Army in 1921. Later he was the head of IstPart (Commission on the History of October Revolution and Bolshevist Party) and a big figure in the Comintern, and was buried in the Kremlin wall [in Moscow].

Mikhail Gaskovich-Lashkevich was a member of many revvoyensoviets, and later he was in charge of the Siberian Military District, and even later — the First Deputy Chairman of the Revvoyensoviet of the USSR (yet he was buried merely on the Field of Mars [in St. Petersburg]).

Israel Razgon was the military commissar of the Headquarters of Petrograd Military District and participated in the suppression of the Kronstadt Uprising; later, he was in charge of the Red Army of Bukhara, suppressing the uprising in Central Asia; still later he worked in the Headquarters of the Black See Fleet.

Boris Goldberg was Military Commissar of the Tomskaya Guberniya, later of the Permskaya Guberniya, still later of the Privolzhskiy Military District, and even later he was in charge of the Reserve Army and was acknowledged as one of the founders of Soviet Civil Aviation.

Modest Rubenstein was Deputy Head of the Revvoyensoviet of the Special Army, and later he was head of political administration of an army group.

Boris Hippo was the Head of Political Administration of the Black Sea Fleet. (Later he worked in the political administrations of the Baltic Sea Fleet, the Turkestan Front, was the Head of Political Administration of the Central-Asian Military District, and later of the Caucasian Army.)

Michail Landa was a head of the political division of an army, later — Deputy Head of Political Administration of the entire Red Army, and still later Head of Political Administration of the Byelorussian and then of the Siberian Military Districts.

Lev Berlin was Commissar of the Volga Military Flotilla and later worked in the Political Administration of the Crimean Army and still later in that of the Baltic Fleet.[6]

Yet how many outstanding characters acted at lower levels?

Boris Skundin, previously a lowly apprentice of clockmaker Sverdlov, Sr., successively evolved into the military commissar of a division, commissar of army headquarters, political inspector of front, and, finally, into Deputy Head of Political Administration of the 1st Cavalry Army.

Avenir Khanukaev was commander of a guerilla band who later was tried before the revolutionary tribunal for crimes during the capture of Ashgabat and acquitted, and in the same year of 1919 was made into political plenipotentiary of the TurkCommission of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviet of People's Commissars on Kashgar, Bukhara and Khiva.

Moses Vinnitsky ("Mishka-Yaponchik") was a member of the Jewish militia squad in Odessa 1905, and later a gang-leader; he was freed from a hard labor camp by the February Revolution and became a commander of a Jewish fighting brigade in Odessa, simultaneously managing the entire criminal underworld of Odessa. In 1919 he was a commander of a special battalion and later he was in charge of an infantry regiment in the Red Army. His unit was "composed of anarchists and criminals." In the end he was shot by his own side.

Military commissar Isaiah Tzalkovich was in command of a composite company of the [Red] cadets during the suppression of the Kronstadt Uprising.[7]

We can see extraordinary Jewish women in the higher Bolshevik ranks as well.

Nadezda Ostrovskaya rose from the Head of Gubkom [Party Committee of a Guberniya, the highest executive authority in a guberniya] of Vladimir Guberniya to the post of the Head of Political Administration of the entire 10th Army.

Revekka Plastinina headed Gubrevkom and later the Gubkom of Archangel Guberniya.

Is it proper to mention here Cecilia Zelikson-Bobrovskaya, who was a seamstress in her youth, and became the Head of the *Military* Department of the Moscow Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party of Bolsheviks?[8] Or take one of the Furies of the Revolution Eugenia Bosh (or her sister Elena Rozmirovich)?

Or another thing — the Soviets used the phrase "Corps of Red Cossacks." Yet those were not Cossacks who embraced communist ideology but plain bandits (who occasionally disguised themselves as Whites for deception). Those "Cossack Corps" were made of all nationalities from Romanians to Chinese with a full-blown Latvian cavalry regiment. A Russian, Vitaly Primakov, was in command and its Political Department was headed by I. I. Minz (by Isaac Greenberg in the Second Division) and S. Turovskiy was head of the Headquarters. A. Shilman was the head of operative section of the staff, S. Davidson managed the division newspaper, and Ya. Rubinov was in charge of the administrative section of the staff.[9]

Since we began particularizing let's look at the famous leaders of the Red Army, at those never-fading names: Vladimir Antonov-Ovseyenko, Vasily Blucher, Semyon Budyonny, Klim Voroshilov, Boris Dumenko, Pavel Dybenko, Aleksa Dundich, Dmitry Zhloba, Vasily Kikvidze, Epifan Kovtukh, Grigory Kotovsky, Philip Mironov, Mikhail Muravyov, Vitaly Primakov, Ivan Sorokin, Semyon Timoshenko, Mikhail Tukhachevsky, Ieronim Uborevich, Mikhail Frunze, Vasily Chapaev, Yefim Shchadenko, Nikolay Shchors. Why, couldn't they pull it off without Jews?

Or take hundreds and thousands of *Russian* generals and officers of the former Imperial Army, who served in the Red Army, though not in the political sections (they were not invited there), but in other significant posts. True, they had a commissar with a gun behind them, and many served on pain of execution of their hostage families especially in case of military failures. Yet they gave an invaluable advantage to the Reds, which actually might have been crucial for the eventual victory of Bolsheviks. Why, "just about half of the officers of the General Staff worked for the Bolsheviks."[10]

And we should not forget that initial and fatal susceptibility of many Russian peasants (by no means all of them, of course) to Bolshevik propaganda. Shulgin flatly noted: "Death to the Bourgeois" was so successful in Russia because the smell of blood inebriates, alas, so many Russians; and they get into a frenzy like wild beasts."[11]

Yet let's avoid going into another unreasonable extreme, such as the following: "The most zealous executioners in Cheka were not at all the `notorious Jews,´ but the recent minions of the throne, generals and officers."[12] As though they would be tolerated in there, in the Cheka! They were invited there with the only one purpose — to be executed. Yet why such a quick-temper? Those Jews, who worked in the Cheka, were, of course, not the "notorious Jews," but quite young and "committed" ones, with revolutionary garbage filling their heads. And I deem that they served not as *executioners* but mostly as interrogators.

The Cheka ("Extraordinary Commission," *Che-Ka*) was established in December 1917. It instantly gained strength and by the beginning of 1918 it was already filling the entire populace with mortal fear. In fact, it was the *Cheka* that started the "*Red Terror*" long before its beginning was officially announced on September 5, 1918. The Cheka practiced terror from the moment of its inception and continued it long after the end of the Civil War. By January of 1918, the Cheka was "enforcing the death penalty *on the spot* without investigation and trial." Then the country saw the snatching of hundreds and later thousands of absolutely innocent *hostages*, their mass executions at night or mass drowning in whole barges. Historian S. P. Melgunov, who himself happened to experience perilous incarceration in Cheka prisons, unforgettably reflected upon the whole epic story of the "Red Terror" in his famous book *"Red Terror" in Russia 1918-1923*.

"There was not a single town or a district without an office of the omnipotent All-Russian Extraordinary Commission [that is, the Cheka], which from now on becomes the main nerve of state governance and absorbs the last vestiges of law"; "there was not a single place (in the RSFSR [Russian Federation]) without ongoing executions"; "a single verbal order of one man (Dzerzhinsky) doomed to immediate death many thousand people." And even when investigation took place, the Chekists [members of the Cheka] followed their official instructions: "Do not look for evidence incriminating a suspect in hostile speech or action

against Soviet power. The very first question you should ask him is about the social class he belongs to, and what is his descent, upbringing, education and profession. It is these questions that should determine the suspect's fate (the words of M. Latsis in the bulletin *Red Terror* on November 1, 1918 and in *Pravda* on December 25, 1918)." Melgunov notes: "Latsis was not original here, he simply rephrased the words of Robespierre in Convent about the mass terror: `To execute the enemies of the Fatherland, it is sufficient to establish their identities. Not punishment but elimination is required´." Directives from the center are picked up and distributed all over Russia by the *Cheka Weekly* and Melgunov cites the periodical profusely: "*Red Sword* is published in Kiev … in an editorial by Lev Krainy we read: `Old foundations of morality and humanity invented by the bourgeoisie do not and cannot exist for us´…. A. certain Schwartz follows: `The proclaimed Red Terror should be implemented in a proletarian way… If physical extermination of all servants of Tsarism and capitalism is the prerequisite for the establishment of the worldwide dictatorship of proletariat, then it wouldn't stop us.´"[13]

It was a *targeted*, pre-designed and long-term Terror. Melgunov also provides estimates of the body count of that "unheard-of swing of murders" (precise numbers were practically not available then). "Yet, I suppose these horrors … pale into insignificance with respect to the number of victims if compared to what happened in the South after the end of the Civil War. Denikin's [the general of the White army in command of the South Russian front] rule was crumbling. New power was ascending, accompanied by a bloody reign of vengeful terror, of mere retaliation. At this point it was not a civil war, it was physical liquidation of a former adversary." There were waves and waves of raids, searches, new raids and arrests. "Entire wards of prisoners are escorted out and every last man is executed. Because of the large number of victims, a machine-gun is used"; "they execute 15-16-years-old children and 60-years-old elders." The following is a quote from a Cheka announcement in the Kuban region: "Cossack villages and settlements, which give shelter to Whites and Greens [Ukrainian nationalists], will be destroyed, the entire adult population — executed, and all property — confiscated." After Wrangel [another White general] left, "Crimea was dubbed the `All-Russian Cemetery´" (different estimates suggest the number of murdered as between 120,000 and 150,000). "In Sevastopol people were not just shot but hanged, hanged by dozens and even by hundreds," Nakhimov Prospect [a major street] was lined with the corpses of the hanged … people arrested on the streets and hastily executed without trial." Terror in the Crimea continued through 1921.[14]

But no matter how deep we dig into the history of Cheka, special departments, special squads, too many deeds and names will remain unknown, covered by the decomposed remnants of witnesses and the ash of incinerated Bolshevik documents. Yet even the remaining documents are overly eloquent. Here is a copy of a secret "Extract from the protocol of a meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party of Bolsheviks" dated by April 18, 1919, obtained from the Trotsky archive at Columbia University.

"Attended cc.[comrades] Lenin, Krestinsky, Stalin, Trotsky.

Heard: …3. Statement of c. Trotsky that Jews and Latvians constitute a huge percentage of officials in the front-line Chekas, front-line and rear area executive commissions and central

Soviet agencies, and that their percentage in the front-line troops is relatively small, and that because of this, strong chauvinist agitation is conducted among the Red Army soldiers with certain success, and that, according to c. Trotsky's opinion, it is necessary to redistribute the Party personnel to achieve a more uniform representation of officials of all nationalities between front-line and rear areas.

Decided: To propose cc. Trotsky and Smilga to draft an appropriate Directive of the Central Committee to the commissions responsible for the allotment of cadres between the central and local Soviet organizations and the front."[15]

Yet it is hard to believe that the meeting produced the intended effect. A contemporary researcher, the first who approached "the problem of the role and place of Jews (and other ethnic minorities) in Soviet machinery," studied declassified archive documents and concluded that "at the initial stage of activity of the punitive agencies, during the `Red Terror,´ national minorities constituted approximately 50% of the central Cheka apparatus, with their representation on the major posts reaching 70%."[16] The author provides September 25, 1918 statistical data: among the ethnic minorities — numerous Latvians and fairly numerous Poles "– the Jews are quite noticeable, especially among "major and active Cheka officials," i.e., commissars and investigators. For instance, among the "investigators of the Department of Counter-Revolutionary Activities – the most important Cheka department – half were Jews."[17]

Below are the service records of several Chekists of the very first call (from the *Russian Jewish Encyclopedia*).[18]

Veniamin Gerson was in the Cheka from 1918, and from 1920 he was a personal referent to Dzerzhinsky.

Israel Leplevsky, a former member of Bund, joined the Bolsheviks in 1917 and worked in the Cheka from 1918; he was the head of the State Political Directorate [formed from the Cheka in 1922] of the Podolsk Guberniya and later of the Special Department of Odessa. And he climbed all the way up to the post of head of the OGPU [Joint State Political Directorate, the successor to the Cheka] of USSR! Later he occupied posts of Narkom of Internal Affairs of Byelorussia and Uzbekistan.

Zinovy Katznelson became a Chekist immediately after the October Revolution; later he was a head of special departments in several armies, and then of the entire Southern Front. Still later we can see him in the highest ranks in the Cheka headquarters, and even later at different times he was in charge of the Cheka of the Archangel Guberniya, the Transcaucasian Cheka, the North Caucasus GPU, the Kharkov GPU [another Cheka-successor secret police organization]; he also was deputy to the Narkom of Internal Affairs of Ukraine and deputy head of the entire GULag [that is, the government agency that administered the main Soviet penal labor camp systems].

Solomon Mogilevsky was chair of the Ivano-Voznesensk tribunal in 1917, then in charge of Cheka in Saratov. Later we find him again in an army tribunal; and after that he was in succession: deputy head of the Bureau of Investigations of the Moscow Cheka, head of Foreign Affairs Department of Cheka headquarters, and head of the Cheka of Transcaucasia.

Did Ignaty Vizner contemplate the scale of his actions when he investigated the case of Nicolay Gumilev? Not likely – he was too busy. He served in the Special Section at the Presidium of Cheka headquarters, he was the founder of the Bryansk Cheka, and later he was an investigator in the case of the Kronstadt Uprising and a special plenipotentiary of the Presidium of the Cheka-GPU on cases of special importance.

Lev Levin-Velsky, former member of the Bund [a Jewish socialist labor organization], was in charge of the Cheka of the Simbirsk Guberniya in 1918-1919, later of the Special Department of the 8th Army, still later of the Cheka of the Astrakhan Guberniya. Beginning in 1921, he was an envoy plenipotentiary of the central Cheka in the Far East, and later, from 1923, an envoy plenipotentiary of the OGPU in Central Asia. Still later, from the beginning of 1930, he worked in the Moscow OGPU. (And even later in his career he was deputy Narkom of Internal Affairs of the USSR.)

Or consider Nahum (Leonid) Etington: active in the Cheka beginning in 1919, later head of the Cheka of the Smolensk Guberniya; still later he worked in the GPU of Bashkiria; it was he who orchestrated the assassination of Trotsky.

Isaak (Semyon) Schwartz: in 1918-1919 he was the very first chair of the All-Ukranian Cheka. He was succeeded by Yakov Lifshitz who beginning in 1919 was the head of the Secret Operations Division and simultaneously a deputy head of the Cheka of the Kiev Guberniya; later he was deputy head of the Cheka of the Chernigov Guberniya, and still later — of the Kharkov Guberniya; and even later he was in charge of the Operative Headquarters of the All-Ukrainian Cheka; still later, in 1921-1922, he ran the Cheka of the Kiev Guberniya.

Let's look at the famous Matvei Berman. He began his career in a districtCheka in the North Urals; in 1919 he was assigned as deputy dead of the Cheka of the Yekaterinburg Guberniya, from 1920 – head of Cheka of Tomsk Guberniya, from 1923 – of the Buryat-Mongolian Guberniya, from 1924 – Deputy Head of the OGPU of all of Central Asia, from 1928 – head of the OGPU of Vladivostok, from 1932 – head of the entire GULag and simultaneously a deputy Narkom of the NKVD [a successor organization to the Cheka, GPU and OGPU] (from 1936). (His brother Boris was in the State Intelligence Organs since 1920; in 1936 he served as deputy head of foreign intelligence section in the NKVD.) Boris Pozern, a commissar of the Petrograd Commune, substantially contributed to matching images of a Jew and that of a Chekist in people's minds; on September 2, 1918, he co-signed the proclamation on "Red Terror" with Zinoviev and Dzerzhinsky. (The *Encyclopedia* missed one Aleksandr Ioselevich, secretary of the Petrograd Cheka, who had co-signed the Red Terror execution lists with Gleb Bokiy in September, 1918.)

Yet there were others, even more famous individuals. For instance, Yakov Agranov, a Chekist, phenomenally successful in conducting repressions; he invented "Tagantzev's Conspiracy" (through which he had killed Gumilev); he directed "cruel interrogations of participants of the Kronstadt Uprising." Or take notorious Yakov Blumkin, who participated in the assassination of the German ambassador in 1918; he was arrested and later amnestied, and then served in Trotsky's secretariat, and later – in Mongolia, Transcaucasia, the Middle East, and was shot in 1929.

And there were numerous personnel behind every Cheka organizer…. And hundreds and thousands of innocents met them during interrogations, in basements and during the executions.

There were Jews among the victims too. Those who suffered from the massive communist onslaught on the "bourgeoisie" were mostly merchants. "In the Maloarkhangelsk District, a merchant (Yushkevich) was placed on a red-hot cast-iron stove by members of a communist squad for failure to pay taxes." (From the same source: some peasants, who defaulted on the surplus appropriation system, were lowered on ropes into water wells to simulate drowning; or, during the winter, they froze people into ice pillars for failure to pay revolutionary taxes. The particular sort of punishment depended on the imagination of the executioners.[19]) Similarly, Korolenko described how two millers, named Aronov and Mirkin, were extrajudicially shot for not complying with absurd communist-mandated prices on flour.[20] Or here is another example. In 1913, former Kiev Governor Sukovkin advocated innocence of Beilis [during Beilis' Trial]. When the Reds came, he was arrested. Thousands of Jews in Kiev signed a petition on his behalf, yet the Cheka had shot him nevertheless.

How then can we explain that the Russian populace generally regarded the new terror as "Jewish terror"? Look how many innocent Jews were accused of that. Why was the perception that Chekists and Jews were all but the same so widespread among both the Reds and the Whites alike and among the people in general? Who is responsible for that? Many. And the White Army is also responsible as we discuss below. Yet not the least among these reasons is because of the Chekists themselves, who facilitated this identification by their ardent service on the highest posts in Cheka.

Today we hear bitter complaints that it was not only Jews who clung to the power, and why any particular clemency should be expected from the Jewish Chekists? True. These objections, however, cannot alter the harsh certitude: the incredibly enormous power on an unimaginable scale had come into the hands of those Jewish Chekists, who at that time were *supreme*, by status and rank, representatives of Russian Jewry (no matter how horribly it sounds). And those representatives (again, *not elected* by their own people) were not capable of finding enough self-restraint and self-scrutinizing sobriety to come around, check themselves, and opt out. It is like the Russian cautionary proverb: "Ah, do not hurry to grab, first blow on your fingers" And the Jewish people (who did not elect those Chekists as their representatives), that already numerous and active city-dwelling community (weren't there prudent elders among them?) also failed to stop them: be careful, we are a small minority in this country! (Yet who listened to elders in that age?)

G. Landau writes: "Loss of affiliation with a social class overthrew the fine structure of Jewish society and destroyed the inner forces of resistance and even that of stability, sending even them under the chariot of triumphant Bolshevism." He finds that apart from the ideas of socialism, separatist nationalism, and permanent revolution, "we were astonished to find among the Jews what we never expected from them — cruelty, sadism, unbridled violence — everything that seemed so alien to a people so detached from physical activity; those who yesterday couldn't handle a rifle, today were among the vicious cutthroats."[21]

Here is more about the aforementioned Revekka Plastinina-Maizel from the Archangel Guberniya Cheka: "Infamous for her cruelty all over the north of Russia…, [she] voluntarily

`perforated napes and foreheads´… and personally shot more than one hundred men." Or "about one Baka who was nicknamed `a bloody boy´ for his youth and cruelty" — first "in Tomsk and then as the head of the Cheka" of the Irkutsk Guberniya.[22] (Plastinina's career carried her up right to a seat in the Supreme Court of RSFSR which she occupied in 1940s.[23]) Some may recall the punitive squad of Mandelbaum in Archangel in the north of Russia, others — the squad of "Mishka-Yaponchik" in Ukraine….

What would you expect from peasants in the Tambov Guberniya if, during the heat of the suppression of the great peasant uprising in this Central-Russian black-earth region, the dismal den of the Tambov Gubcom was inhabited by masterminds of grain allotments, secretaries of Gubcom P. Raivid and Pinson and by the head of the propaganda department, Eidman? (A. G. Shlikhter, whom we remember from Kiev in 1905, was there as well, this time as the chairman of the Executive Committee of the guberniya.) Y. Goldin was the Foodstuffs Commissar of the Tambov Guberniya; it was he who triggered the uprising by exorbitant confiscations of grain, whereas one N. Margolin, commander of a grain confiscation squad, was famous for *whipping* the peasants who failed to provide grain. (And he murdered them too.) According to Kakurin, who was the chief of staff to Tukhachevsky, a plenipotentiary representative of the Cheka headquarters in the Tambov Guberniya during that period was Lev Levin. Of course, not only Jews were in it! However, when Moscow took the suppression of the uprising into her own hands in February 1921, the supreme command of the operation was assigned to Efraim Sklyansky, the head of "Interdepartmental Anti-Banditry Commission," — and so the peasants, notified about that with leaflets, were able to draw their own conclusions.

And what should we say about the genocide on the river Don, when hundreds of thousands of the flower of Don Cossacks were murdered? What should we expect from the Cossack memories when we take into consideration all those unsettled accounts between a revolutionary Jew and a Don Cossack?

In August 1919, the Volunteer Army took Kiev and opened several Chekas and found the bodies of those recently executed; Shulgin composed nominal lists of victims using funeral announcements published in the reopened *Kievlyanin*; one can't help noticing that almost all names were Slavic … it was the "chosen Russians" who were shot. Materials produced by the *Special Investigative Commission in the South of Russia* provide insights into the Kiev Cheka and its command personnel (based on the testimony of a captured Cheka interrogator)[25]: "The headcount of the `Cheka´ staff varied between 150 and 300 … percentage-wise, there was 75% Jews and 25% others, and those in charge were almost exclusively Jews." Out of twenty members of the Commission, i.e., the top brass who determined people's destinies, fourteen were Jews. "All detained were kept either in the `Cheka´ building or in the Lukyanov's prison…. A special shed was fitted for executions in the building on Institutskaya St. 40, on the corner with Levashovskaya St., where the main `Cheka´ office of the guberniya had moved from Ekaterininskaya St. An executioner (and sometimes `amateur´ Chekists) escorted a completely naked victim into a shed and ordered the victim to fall facedown on the ground. Then he finished the victim with a shot in the back of the head. Executions were performed using revolvers (typically Colts). Usually because of the short distance, the skull of the executed person exploded into fragments…. The next victim was similarly escorted inside and laid down nearby…. When number of victims was exceeding … the capacity of the shed,

new victims were laid down right upon the dead or were shot at the entrance of the shed…. Usually the victims went to their execution without resistance."

This is what the "people were whispering about." Or take another incident, witnessed by Remizov (whom it is hard to suspect of anti-Semitism given his revolutionary-democratic past): "Recently there was a military training nearby, at the Academy, and one Red Army soldier said: `Comrades, lets not go to the front, it is all because of Yids that we fight!´ And someone with a brief-case asked him: `Which regiment are you from?´ And the soldier again: `Comrades, let's not go to the front, it is all because of Yids!´ And that one with a briefcase ordered: `Shoot him!´ Then two other Red Army soldiers came out and the first one tried to flee. But he didn't make it to the corner as others got him and shot him – his brain spilled over and there was a pool of blood."[26]

The Kronstadt Uprising had distinctly anti-Jewish character (and so all the more was it doomed): they destroyed portraits of Trotsky and Zinoviev [both Jewish], but not those of Lenin. And Zinoviev didn't have guts to go to negotiate with the rebels – he would be torn into pieces. So they sent Kalinin [Russian].

There were labor strikes in Moscow in February 1921 that had the slogan: "Down with Communists and Jews!"

We have already mentioned that during the Civil War the majority of Russian socialists (and there were numerous Jews among them) were, of course, on Lenin's side, not on Admiral Kolchak's and some of them actually fought for the Bolsheviks. (For example, consider Bund member Solomon Schwartz: during the period of the provisional government, he was a director of a department in a ministry; during the Civil War he volunteered to the Red Army though he did not indicate his rank; later he emigrated abroad where he published two books about the Jewish situation in the USSR; we will cite him below.)

Thus it *looked* as though not only Bolshevik Jews, but all of Jewry had decided to take the Red side in the Civil War. Could we claim that their choice was completely deliberate? No. Could we claim that they didn't have any other choice? Again, no.

Shulgin describes the enormous exodus from Kiev on October 1, 1919 as the city was to be surrendered to Bolsheviks. It was an entirely Russian exodus, people were leaving on foot with knapsacks, across the bridges over Dnepr river; he estimated their numbers at around 60,000. "There were no Jews in this exodus: they were not noticeable among those many thousands of Russians (men, women and children), with bundles in their hands streaming across the beautiful Chain Bridge under a sorrowful net of rain." There were more than 100,000 Jews in Kiev at that time, Shulgin writes. And all of those rich and very rich Jews — they didn't leave, they chose to stay and wait for arrival of Bolsheviks. "The Jews decided not to share their fate with us. And with that they carved a new and possibly the deepest divide between us."[27]

So it was in many other places. According to the testimony of socialist-revolutionary S. Maslov: "It is a fact that in towns and cities of southern Russia, especially in cities to the west of the Dnepr that changed hands repeatedly, the arrival of Soviets was most celebrated and

the most of hollow sympathy was expressed in the Jewish quarters, and not infrequently only in those alone."[28]

A contemporary American historian (Bruce Lincoln, author of a big treatise about our Civil War) "said that the entire Ukrainian Cheka was composed of almost 80% by Jews," that "can be explained by the fact that, prior to arrival of the Reds, cruel pogroms went on non-stop; indeed those were the bloodiest pogroms since the times of Bogdan Khmelnytsky [leader of the Cossack rebellion in Ukraine in 1648-1657]."[29] We will discuss the pogroms soon, though it should be noted that the time sequence was actually the opposite: those 80% [Jews] were already staffing the Cheka in 1918, whereas the Petliura's [a Ukrainian publicist, writer, journalist who was head of state during the Ukrainian independence of 1918-1920] pogroms only gathered momentum during 1919 (the pogroms by White Army troops began in the fall of 1919).

Yet it is impossible to answer the eternal question who is the guilty party, who pushed it into abyss. Of course, it is incorrect to say that the Kiev Cheka did what it did because it was three-quarters Jewish. Still, this is something that Jewish people should remember and reflect upon.

And yes, there were Jews then who appealed to their compatriots looking back on the tragedy that had befallen both Russia and Russian Jewry. In their proclamation *To the Jews of all countries!*, this group wrote in 1923 that "overly zealous participation of Jewish Bolsheviks in the oppression and destruction of Russia … is blamed upon all of us … the Soviet rule is identified with Jewish rule, and fierce hatred of Bolsheviks turns into the equally fierce hatred of Jews…. [We] firmly believe that Bolshevism is *the worst* of all evils possible for the Jews and all other peoples of Russia, and that to fight tooth and nail against the rule of that international rabble over Russia is our sacred duty before humankind, culture, before our Motherland and the Jewish people."[30] Yet the Jewish community "reacted to these declarations with great indignation."[31] (We will discuss it in the next chapter.)

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The Civil War spilled over Russia's borders. Let's review that briefly (though the events in Europe are outside of the scope of this book).

The Bolsheviks invaded Poland in 1920. (At this point they had recalled and adroitly used the Russian "national longing and national enthusiasm" — as Nahamkis-Steklov put it in an *Izvestia* editorial.[32]) And it appears that Polish Jews met the Red Army very warmly. According to a Soviet source, whole battalions of Jewish workers participated in the fighting at Minsk.[33] Reading from the *Jewish Encyclopedia*: "on numerous occasions, Poles accused Jews of supporting the enemy, of `anti-Polish´, `pro-Bolshevist´ and even `pro-Ukrainian´ attitudes." During the Soviet-Polish war many Jews "were killed [by Polish Army] on charges of spying for the Red Army."[34] However, we should be wary of possible exaggerations here as we remember similar accusations in espionage made by Russian military authorities during the war, in 1915.

The Soviets quickly formed a revolutionary "government" for Poland headed by F. Dzerzhinsky. In it were Y. Markhlevsky and F. Kon. Of course, they were surrounded by "blood work" specialists and ardent propagandists. (Among the latter we see a former pharmacist from Mogilev A. I. Rotenberg. Soon after the aborted Red revolution in Poland, he, together with Bela Kun and Zalkind-Zemlyachka, went on to conduct the deadly "cleansing" of the Crimea. In 1921 he participated in that glorious work again – this time "purging" Georgia, again under the direct command of Dzerzhinsky. At the end of 1920s Rotenberg was in charge of the Moscow NKVD.)

Not only Poland but Hungary and Germany as well were affected by the Red Revolution. An American researcher writes: "the intensity and tenacity of anti-Semitic prejudice in both the east and the center of Europe was significantly influenced by Jewish participation in the revolutionary movement." "In the beginning of 1919, the Soviets, under predominantly Jewish leadership, started revolutions in Berlin and Munich," and "the share of activist Jews was" disproportionately high in the German Communist Party of that period," though "that party's support in the Jewish community at large was not significant." Four out of eleven members of the Central Committee were Jews with a university education." In December 1918, one of them, Rosa Luxemburg, wrote: "In the name of the greatest aspirations of humankind, our motto when we deal with our enemies is: "Finger into the eye, knee on the chest!" Rebellion in Munich was led by a theater critic, Kurt Eisner, a Jew of "bohemian appearance." He was killed, but the power in conservative and Catholic Bavaria was seized by "a new government made up of leftist intellectual Jews, who proclaimed the `Bavarian Soviet Republic´"(G. Landauer, E. Toller, E. Muhsam, O. Neurath) In a week the republic "was overthrown by an even more radical group," which declared the "Second Bavarian Soviet Republic" with Eugen Levine at the helm.[35] Let's read an article about him in the *Encyclopedia*: born into merchant Jewish family, he used to be a socialist-revolutionary; he participated in the [Russian] revolution of 1905, later became German national, joined the "Spartacist movement" of R. Luxemburg and K. Liebknecht, and now he became the head of the Communist government in Bavaria, which also included the abovementioned E. Muhsam, E. Toller and a native of Russia, M. Levin.[36] The uprising was defeated in May 1919. "The fact that the leaders of the suppressed Communist revolts were Jews was one of the most important reasons for the resurrection of political anti-Semitism in contemporary Germany."[37]

"While Jews played a "quite conspicuous" role in the Russian and German communist revolutions, their role in Hungary became central…. Out of 49 People's Commissars there, 31 were Jews," Bela Kun being the most prominent of them; "the foreign minister (de-facto head of government)," he would orchestrate a bloodbath in the Crimea half a year later. Here we find Matyas Rakosi, Tibor Szamuely, Gyorgy Lukacs. "Granted, the prime-minister was a gentile, Sandor Garbai, but Rakosi later joked that Garbai was elected because someone had to sign execution orders on Sabbath days." "Statues of Hungarian kings and heroes were knocked off their pedestals, the national anthem outlawed, and wearing the national colors criminalized." "The tragedy of the situation was escalated by the fact that historically Hungarian Jews were much wealthier than their Eastern-European countrymen and were much more successful in Hungarian society."[38]

The direct relation between the Hungarian Soviet Republic and our Civil War becomes more clear by the virtue of the fact that special Red Army Corps were being prepared to go to the rescue of the Hungarian Soviet Republic, but they couldn't manage it in time and the Republic fell (in August 1919).

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The breakdown of the universally hated Russian Empire cost all involved dearly, including the Jews. G. Landau writes: "In general, revolution is gruesome, risky and dangerous business. It is especially gruesome and dangerous for a minority, which in many ways is alien to the bulk of population…. To secure their wellbeing, such minority should unwaveringly cling to law and rely on unshakable continuity of social order and on the inertia of statutory power. Forces of revolutionary misalignment and permissiveness hit such a minority particularly hard."[39]

It was looming — straight forward, into the so promising future! Yet in the near future, during the Civil War, there was no law and Jewry was hit by pillages and pogroms on the scale not even close to anything they experienced in days of the Tsar. And those pogroms were launched not by the White side. Because of the density of the Jewish population in Ukraine, it was inevitable that a third force, apart from the Reds and Whites, would interfere in the Jewish destinies — that of Ukrainian separatism.

In April 1917, when the Ukrainian Rada [upper house of parliament] assembled for the first time, "Jewry … did not yet believe in the victory of Ukrainian Nationalism," and that was manifested in the character of their voting during municipal summer elections: Jews did not have "any reason" to vote for Ukrainian separatists.[40] But already in June, when something resembling real independent Ukrainian governance was taking shape — under which apparently the Jews would have to live from now on — the Jewish representatives entered the Lesser [lower] Rada, and a Vice-Secretariat on Jewish nationality ("Jewish Ministry") was established. The latter worked on the long-cherished project of "Jewish National Autonomy" (according to which every nationality and now – the Jewish one, creates its own national union, which can legislate according to the needs and interests of their nation and for that it receives financial support from the treasury, and a representative of the union becomes a member of the cabinet). Initially, the formative Ukrainian government was generally benevolent toward Jews, but by the end of 1917 the mood changed, and the bill on autonomy was met in the Rada with laughter and contempt; nevertheless, in January 1918, it was passed, though with difficulties. For their part, the Jews reluctantly accepted "the Third Universal" (November 9, 1917, the initiation of Ukrainian independence from Russia) as now they feared anarchy, traditionally dangerous for Jewish populations, and were afraid of a split within Russian Jewry. Still, Jewish philistines were making fun of the Ukrainian language and shop-signs, were afraid of Ukrainian nationalism, and believed in the Russian state and Russian culture.[41] Lenin wrote: Jews, like Great Russians, "ignore the significance of the national question in Ukraine."[42]

However, everything pointed toward secession and the Jewish delegates in the Rada did not dare to vote against the Fourth Universal (January 11, 1918, on complete secession of Ukraine). Immediately thereafter, the Bolsheviks began an offensive against Ukraine. The first "Ukrainian" Central Committee of the Ukrainian Communist Party of Bolsheviks was

formed in Moscow and later moved to Kharkov; it was headed by Georgiy Pyatakov and among its members were Semyon Schwartz and Serafima Gopner. When by the end of January 1918 they moved to Kiev, Grigory Chudnovsky took the post of the Commissar of Kiev, Kreitzberg became a commissar of finances, D. Raikhstein " press commissar, Shapiro — commissar of the army. "There was no shortage of Jewish names among the top Bolsheviks … in such centers as Odessa and Ekaterinoslav. That was sufficient to fuel talks about "Bolshevik Jews" and "Jewish Bolsheviks" among the troops loyal to the Rada. Verbal cursing about "traitorous Jews" became almost commonplace"; "in the very midst of street fighting [for Kiev], the Zionist fraction produced an official inquiry on the matter of anti-Jewish excesses." The question turned into a "verbal skirmish between Ukrainian delegates and representatives of national minorities."[43]

Thus enmity split apart the Jews and the Ukrainian separatists.

"The Ukrainian government and the leaders of Ukrainian parties were evacuated to Zhitomir, but the Jewish representatives did not follow them," they remained under the Bolsheviks. And in addition, the Bolsheviks in Kiev were "supported by a sizable group of Jewish workers, who returned from England after the [February, Kerensky] revolution" and who now wholly siding with the Soviet regime … took up the posts of commissars and … officials," and created a "special Jewish squad of Red Guards."[44]

Yet soon after the conclusion of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk [in which the Soviets ceded Ukraine to the Central Powers] as the government of independent Ukraine returned to Kiev under the aegis of Austrian and German bayonets in the beginning of February of 1918, the "haidamakas" [spontaneous, popular uprisings against Polish rule that took place in Ukraine in the 18th century] and "free Cossacks" began snatching and shooting any former "Jewish commissars," they could find. Yet those were not actual Jewish pogroms, and very soon Petliura's government was replaced by the Hetman government of [Cossack leader] Skoropadsky for the next seven months. "The command of the units of the German Army that had occupied Kiev in the spring, treated the needs of Jewish population with understanding." (And that population was not-insubstantial: in 1919, 21% of Kiev's inhabitants were Jewish.[45]) A Jewish Kadet [a member of Russian Constitutional Democrat Party] Sergei Gutnik became the Minister of Trade and Industry in the Hetman government.[46] Under the Hetmanate, Zionists acted without hindrance, and an independent Jewish Provisional National Assembly and a Jewish National Secretariat were elected.

Yet Hetmanate fell and in December 1918 Kiev came under the control of the Directorate of Ukraine led by Petliura and Vynnychenko. The Bund and Poale-Zion [a movement of Marxist Jewish workers] did their best to help their fellow socialists of the Directorate and Jewish Secretariat and also made conciliatory moves. But Petliura saw it differently. His mouthpiece, the newspaper *Vidrodzhennya* wrote: "The birth of the Ukrainian State was not expected by the Jews. The Jews did not anticipate it despite having an extraordinary ability of getting the wind of any news. They … emphasize their knowledge of Russian language and ignore the fact of Ukrainian statehood … Jewry again has joined the side of our enemy."[47] Jews were blamed for all the Bolshevik victories in Ukraine. In Kiev, the Sich Riflemen plundered apartments of wealthy people which *in masse* came over to the capital while the military and atamans [originally Cossack commanders, then used by the Ukrainian National Army]

robbed smaller towns and shtetls. That year, a regiment named after Petliura inaugurated mass pogroms by pillaging the town of Sarny.

A Jewish deputy from the Lesser Rada attempted to ward off the growing tendency toward pogroms among Petliura's troops: "We need to warn Ukrainians that you cannot found your state on anti-Semitism. Leaders of the Directorate should remember that they are dealing with the world's people, which outlived many of its enemies" and threatened to start a struggle against such government.[48] Jewish parties quickly began to radicalize toward the Left, thus inevitably turning their sympathies to Bolshevism.

Arnold Margolin, then Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, said that the situation in Ukraine was reminiscent of the worst times of Khmelnytsky and Gonta [Cossack leader against Polish occupation of Ukraine].[49] D. Pasmanik bitterly noted that Zionists and Jewish nationalists supported the Directorate's government for a while even when anti-Jewish pogroms raged across Ukraine[50]: "How could Jewish socialists forget about the pogromist attitudes of Petliura and other heroes of the Ukrainian Revolution".. How could they forget about the Jewish blood shed by the descendants and disciples of Khmelnytsky, Gonta and Zalizniak""[51] Between December 1918 and August 1919, Petliura's troops carried out dozens of pogroms, killing, according to the Commission of International Red Cross, around 50,000 Jews. The largest pogrom happened on February 15, 1919, in Proskurov after a failed Bolshevik coup attempt.[52] "Jewish pogroms that went on non-stop from the very moment of Ukrainian independence became particularly ferocious during the period of the so-called Directorate and kept going until the Ukrainian armed forces existed."[53]

S. Maslov writes: "True, in the Tsar's times Jews were killed during pogroms but they have never had been killed in such numbers as now and with such callous indifference"; "sometimes during anti-Jewish pogroms by rebellious peasant bands the *entire* shtetls were exterminated with indiscriminate slaughter of children, women and elders."[54] After the pogromists finished with their business, peasants from surrounding villages usually arrived on wagons to join in looting commercial goods often stored in large amounts in the towns because of the unsettled times.[55] "All over Ukraine rebels attacked passenger trains and often commanded `communists and Jews to get out´ of the coach and those who did were shot right on the spot"; or, checking papers of passengers, "suspected Jews were ordered to pronounce `kukuruza´ [corn]) and those who spoke with an accent were escorted out and executed."[56]

American scholar Muller thinks that "the mass extermination of Jews in Ukraine and Byelorussia during the Civil War was by no means a result of articulated policy but rather a common peasant reaction."[57]

Independent rebellious bands of Grigoriev, Zelyony, Sokolovsky, Struk, Angel, Tyutyunik, Yatzeiko, Volynetz and Kozyr-Zirka were particularly uncontrolled and because of this acted with extreme atrocity. However, Nestor Makhno was different.

The raging Civil War provided fertile soil for the self-realization of Makhno's criminal and rebellious personality. We are not going to recount his villainous and clinically-mad deeds in this work, yet it should be noted that he did not harbor anti-Jewish attitudes and that his anarchist-communist followers loudly proclaimed their "implacable hostility toward any

form of anti-Semitism." At different times, a certain Aaron Baron was his Chief of Staff, Lev Zadov-Zenkovsky was his head of counter-intelligence, Volin-Eikhenbaum was head of Makhno's agitprop, Arshinov was his close adviser, and one Kogan headed Administration of Huliaipole [his "capital"]. There was even a 300-strong separate Jewish company among his troops, led by Taranovsky, and though at one point they betrayed Makhno, nevetheless Taranovsky was later pardoned and even made the Makhno's Chief of Staff . "The Jewish poor joined Makhno's army in masses" and allegedly Makhno trapped and executed ataman Grigoriev for the latter's anti-Semitism. In March 1919 Makhno executed peasants from Uspenovka village for a pogrom in the Jewish agricultural colony Gorkoye. However, despite his indisputable pro-Jewish stance (later in emigration in Paris "he was always in a Jewish milieu" until his death), his often uncontrollable troops carried out several Jewish pogroms, for instance, in 1918 near Ekaterinoslav[58] or in the summer of 1919 in Aleksandrovsk, though Makhno and his officers rigorously protected Jewish populations and punished pogromists with death."[59]

To examine the anti-Jewish pogroms during the Russian Civil War, we consult a large volume *Jewish Pogroms: 1918-1921* compiled by Jewish Public Committee for Aid to Victims of Pogroms in 1923 and published later in 1926.[60] (The year of publication explains why we find nothing about pogroms by the Reds — the book "aims to examine the roles of Petliura's troops, the Volunteer [White] Army, and Poles in the carnage of pogroms in the described period.")

Regular troops participated in pogroms in larger cities and towns as they marched, whereas independent bands acted in the hinterlands, thus effectively denying the Jews safety anywhere.

Pogroms by Petliura's troops were particularly atrocious and systematic and sometimes even without looting, such as, for example, pogroms in Proskurov, Felsztyn and Zhytomir in February of 1919, Ovruch in March, Trostyanets, Uman and Novomirgorod in May 1919. The worst pogroms by bands were in Smila (March 1919), Elisavetgrad, Radomyshl, Vapniarka and Slovechno in May 1919, in Dubovka (June 1919); by Denikin's troops – in Fastov (September 1919) and Kiev (October 1919). In Byelorussia, there were pogroms by Polish troops, for example, in Borisov and in the Bobruisk District, and by Polish-supported troops of Bulak-Balachowicz in Mazyr, Turov, Petrakov, Kapatkevitchy, Kovchitsy and Gorodyatitchy (in 1919, 1920, and 1921).

Ukrainian Jewry was horrified by the murderous wave of pogroms. During brief periods of respite, the Jewish population fled *en masse* from already pillaged or threatened places. There was indeed a mass exodus of Jews from shtetls and small towns into larger cities nearby or toward the border with Romania in a foolish hope to find aid there, or they simply "aimlessly fled in panic" as they did from Tetiiv and Radomyshl. "The most populous and flourishing communities were turned into deserts. Jewish towns and shtetls looked like gloomy cemeteries — homes burnt and streets dead and desolated. Several Jewish townships were completely wrecked and turned into ashes — Volodarka, Boguslav, Borshchagovka, Znamenka, Fastov, Tefiapol, Kutuzovka and other places."[61]

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Let us now examine the White side. At first glance it may appear counter-intuitive that Jews did not support the anti-Bolshevik movement. After all, the White forces were substantially more pro-democratic then Bolsheviks (as it was with [White generals] Denikin and Wrangel) and included not only monarchists and all kinds of nationalists but also many liberal groups and all varieties of anti-Bolshevik socialists. So why didn't we see Jews who shared the same political views and sympathies there?

Fateful events irredeemably separated the Jews from the White movement.

The *Jewish Encyclopedia* informs us that "initially many Jews of Rostov supported the White movement. On December 13, 1917 a merchant prince, A. Alperin, gave 800,000 rubles collected by the Jews of Rostov to A. Kaledin, the leader of Don Cossacks, `to organize anti-Bolshevik Cossack troops.´"[62] Yet when General Alekseev [another White commander] was mustering his first squadron in December 1917 in the same city of Rostov and needed funds and asked (note — asked and did not impress) the Rostov-Nakhichevan bourgeoisie (mainly Jewish and Armenian) for money, they refused and he collected just a dab of money and was forced to march out into the winter with unequipped troops – into his Ice March. And later "all appeals by the Volunteer Army were mostly ignored, yet whenever the Bolsheviks showed up and demanded money and valuables, the population obediently handed over millions of rubles and whole stores of goods."[63] When former Russian prime minister (of the Provisional Government) prince G. E. Lvov, begging for aid abroad, visited New York and Washington in 1918, he met a delegation of American Jews who heard him out but offered no aid.[64]

However, Pasmanik quotes a letter saying that by the end of 1918 "more than three and half millions rubles … were being collected in the exclusive Jewish circle" with accompanying "promises and reassurances" of goodwill toward Jews from the White authorities. Despite that, Jews were officially prohibited to buy land in the Chernomorskaya Guberniya because of "vicious speculations by several Jews," though the order was revoked soon afterwards.[65]

Here is another example from my own sources: again in Rostov in February 1918 when the White movement was merely nascent and seemed almost hopeless, an elderly Jewish engineer and manufacturer A. I. Arkhangorodsky, who sincerely considered himself a Russian patriot, literally pushed his reluctant student son into joining the White youth marching out into the night [February 22], embarking on their Ice March (however, his sister didn't let him go). The *Jewish Encyclopedia* also tells us that the "Jews of Rostov were joining Cossack guerilla squadrons and the student's battalion of [White] general L. Kornilov's army."[66]

In Paris in 1975, Col. Levitin, the last surviving commander of the Kornilov Regiment, told me that quite a few Jewish warrant officers, who were commissioned in Kerensky's times, were loyal to Kornilov during the so-called "days of Kornilov" in August 1917. He recalled one Katzman, a holder of the Order of St. George from the First Kutepov Division.

Yet we know that many Whites rejected sympathetic or neutral Jews — because of the prominent involvement of *other* Jews on the Red side, mistrust and anger was bred among the White forces. A modern study suggests that "during the first year of its existence, the White movement was virtually free of anti-Semitism at least in terms of major incidents and Jews were actually serving in the Volunteer Army. However … the situation dramatically

changed by 1919. First, after the Allied victory [in WWI], the widespread conviction among the Whites that Germans helped Bolsheviks was displaced by a mythos about Jews being the backbone of Bolshevism. On the other hand, after the White troops occupied Ukraine, they came under influence of obsessive local anti-Semitism that facilitated their espousal of anti-Jewish actions."[67]

The White Army "was hypnotized by Trotsky and Nakhamkis [an agent of the Bolshevik Central Committee] and that caused the identification of Bolshevism with Jewry and led to pogroms."[68] The Whites perceived Russia as occupied by Jewish commissars – and they marched to liberate her. And given considerable unaccountability of separate units of that nascent and poorly organized army strewn over the vast Russian territories and the general lack of central authority in that war, it is not surprising that, unfortunately, some White troops carried out pogroms. "A. I. Denikin …, like some other leaders of the South Army (e.g., V. Z. Mai-Mayevsky), endorsed Kadet [the Constitutional Democratic Party] and Socialist Revolutionary views and sought to stop the outrages perpetrated by his troops. Yet those efforts were not effective."[69]

Naturally, many Jews were driven by survival instinct and even if they initially expected goodwill on the part of the Volunteer Army, after pogroms by Denikin's troops they lost any inclination to support the White movement.

Pasmanik provides a lively case. "Aleksandrovsk was taken by the Volunteers from the Bolsheviks. They were met by unanimous sincere joy of the citizenry…. Overnight half of the town was sacked and filled by the screaming and moaning of distressed Jews…. Wives were raped … men beaten and murdered, Jewish homes were totally ransacked. The pogrom continued for three days and three nights. Post-executive Cossack cornet Sliva dismissed complaints of the Public Administration saying `it is always like that: we take a city and it belongs to the troops for three days.´"[70] It is impossible to explain all this plunder and violence by soldiers of the Volunteer Army by actions of Jewish commissars.

A top White general, A. von Lampe, claims that rumors about *Jewish* pogroms by the Whites are "tendentiously exaggerated", that these pillaging "requisitions" were unavoidable actions of an army without quartermaster services or regular supplies from the rear areas. He says that Jews were not targeted deliberately but that all citizens suffered and that Jews "suffered more" because they were "numerous and rich." "I am absolutely confident that in the operational theaters of the White armies there were no Jewish *pogroms*, i.e., no organized extermination and pillaging of Jews. There were robberies and even murders … which were purposefully overblown and misrepresented as anti-Jewish pogroms by special press…. Because of these accidents, the Second Kuban Infantry Brigade and the Ossetian Cavalry Regiment were disbanded…. All the people, be they Christian or Jewish, suffered in disorderly areas."[71] There were executions (on tip offs by locals) of those unfortunate commissars and Chekists who did not manage to escape and there were quite a few Jews among them.

Events in Fastov in September 1919 appear differently. According to the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, Cossacks "behaved outrageously … they killed, raped and flouted Jewish religious feelings (they had broken into a synagogue during Yom Kippur, beat up the whole congregation, raped the women and tore apart the Torah scrolls.) About one thousand were killed."[72] A

methodical quarter-by-quarter pillaging of Jews in Kiev after a brief return of the White troops in the end of October 1919 was dubbed the "quiet pogrom." Shulgin writes: "The commanders strictly prohibited `pogroms.´ Yet the "Yids" were really an annoyance and, secondly, the `heroes´ were hungry…. In general, the Volunteers in large cities were starving." There were nights of plunder but without murder and rape. It was "the end of Denikin's period … and the beginning of the agony of the Volunteer Army."[73]

"By the route of its offensive and, particularly, its retreat," during its last brutal retreat in November-December of 1919, the White Army carried out "a large number of Jewish pogroms" (acknowledged by Denikin), apparently not only for plunder but also for revenge. However, Bikerman says that "murders, pillage and rape of women were not faithful companions of the White Army, unlike what is claimed by our [Jewish] National Socialists who exaggerate the horrible events to advance their own agenda."[74]

Shulgin agrees: "For a true White, a massacre of unarmed civilians, the murder of women and children, and robbing someone's property are absolutely impossible things to do." Thus, the "true Whites" in this case are guilty of *negligence*. They were not sufficiently rigorous in checking the scum adhering to the White movement."[75]

Pasmanik concurred that "everybody understands that General Denikin did not want pogroms but when I was in Novorossiysk and Ekaterinodar in April-May 1919, i.e., before the march to the north, I could sense a thickened and pervasive atmosphere of anti-Semitism everywhere."[76] Whatever it was — negligence or revenge — it served well to ignite the "White" pogroms of 1919.

Still, "by unanimous testimony of those unlucky enough to experience both types of pogroms [those by Petliura's troops and those by White Army], it was predominantly Petliura's troops who went for Jewish life and soul — they did the most killing."[77]

"It was not the Volunteer Army that initiated Jewish pogroms in the new Russia. They began in the "reborn" Poland the day after she become a free and independent state. While in Russia itself they were started by the Ukrainian troops of the Democrat Petliura and the Socialist Vynnychenko…. The Ukrainians turned pogroms into an everyday event."[78].

The Volunteer Army did not start the pogroms but it carried on with them, being fueled by a false conviction that *all* Jews were for Bolsheviks. "The name of L. Trotsky was particularly hated among the Whites and Petliura's soldiers and almost every pogrom went under a slogan `This is what you get for Trotsky.´" And even "the Kadets who in the past always denounced any expression of anti-Semitism, and all the more so the pogroms … during their November 1919 conference in Kharkov … demanded that Jews `declare relentless war against those elements of Jewry who actively participate in the Bolshevist movement.´" At the same time the Kadets "emphasized … that the White authorities do everything possible to stop pogroms," namely that since the beginning of October 1919 "the leadership of the [Volunteer] Army began punishing pogromists with many measures including execution" and as a result "pogroms stopped for a while." Yet "during the December 1919-March 1920 retreat of the Volunteer Army from Ukraine the pogroms become particularly violent" and the Jews were accused "of shooting the retreating Whites in the back." (Importantly, "there

were no pogroms in Siberia by A. Kolchak's troops," as "Kolchak did not tolerate pogroms."[79])

D.O. Linsky, himself a former White Guard, emphatically writes: "Jewry was possibly given a unique chance to fight so hard for the Russian land, that the slanderous claim, that for Jews Russia is just geography and not Fatherland, would disappear once and for all." Actually, "there was and is no alternative: the victory of anti-Bolshevik forces will lead from suffering to revival of the whole country and of the Jewish people in particular…. Jewry should devote itself to the Russian Cause entirely, to sacrifice their lives and wealth…. Through the dark stains on the White chasubles one should perceive the pure soul of the White Movement…. In an army where many Jewish youths were enlisted, in an army relying on extensive material support from Jewish population, anti-Semitism would suffocate and any pogromist movement would be countered and checked by internal forces. Jewry should have supported the Russian Army which went on in an immortal struggle for the Russian land…. Jewry was pushed from the Russian Cause, yet Jewry had to push away the pushers." He writes all this "after having painful personal experience of participation in the White movement. Despite all those dark and serious problems that surfaced in the White movement, we delightfully and with great reverence bow our uncovered heads before this one and only commendable fact of the struggle against the ignominy of Russian history, the so-called Russian Revolution." It was "a great movement for the unfading values of [upholding] the human spirit."[80]

Yet the White Army did not support even those Jews who volunteered for service in it. What a humiliation people like doctor Pasmanik had to go through (many Jews were outraged after finding him "among the pogromists")! "The Volunteer Army persistently refused to accept Jewish petty officers and cadets, even those who in October 1917 bravely fought against Bolsheviks. It was a huge moral blow to Russian Jewry." "I will never forget," he writes, "how eleven Jewish petty officers came to me in Simferopol complaining that they were expelled from fighting units and posted as … cooks in the rear."[81]

Shulgin writes: "If only as many Jews participated in the White Movement as did in the `revolutionary democracy´ or in `constitutional democracy´ before that…." Yet only a tiny part of Jewry joined the White Guards … only very few individuals, whose dedication could not be overvalued as the anti-Semitism [among the Whites] was already clearly obvious by that time. Meanwhile, there were many Jews among the Reds…, there, most importantly, they often occupied the `top command positions´…. Aren't we really aware of the bitter tragedy of those few Jews who joined the Volunteer Army" The lives of those Jewish Volunteers were as endangered by the enemy's bullets as they were by the `heroes of the rear´ who tried to solve the Jewish question in their own manner."[82]

Yet it was not all about the "heroes of the rear." And anti-Semitic feelings had burst into flames among the young White officers from the intellectual families — despite all their education, tradition, and upbringing.

And this all the more doomed the White Army to isolation and perdition.

Linsky tells us that on the territories controlled by the Volunteer Army, the Jews were not employable in the government services or in the OsvAg ("Information-Propaganda Agency,"

an intelligence and counter-intelligence agency, established in the White Army by General A.M. Dragomirov). Yet he refutes the claim that publications of OsvAg contained anti-Semitic propaganda and that pogromists were not punished. No, "the command did not want Jewish pogroms, yet … it could not act against the pogromist attitudes of their troops … it psychologically couldn't use severe measures…. The army was not as it used to be, and requirements of the regular wartime or peacetime military charters could not be fully applied to it," as the minds of all soldiers were already battle-scarred by the Civil War.[83] "Although they didn't want pogroms, Denikin's government didn't dare to denounce anti-Semitic propaganda loudly," despite the fact that the pogroms inflicted great harm on Denikin's army. Pasmanik concludes: the Volunteer Army "generally assumed a hostile attitude toward the entire Russian Jewry."[84] But I. Levin disagrees, saying that "the views of only one part of the movement, those of the active pogromists, are now attributed to the whole movement," while in reality "the White Movement was quite complex, it was composed of different factions … with often opposite views."[85] Yet to bet on Bolsheviks, to walk in their shadows because of fear of pogroms, is … obvious and evident madness…. A Jew says: either the Bolsheviks or the pogroms, whereas he should have been saying: the longer the Bolsheviks hold power, the closer we are to certain death."[86] Yet the "Judeo-Communists" were, in the parlance of the Whites, agitators as well.

All this was resolutely stopped by Wrangel in Crimea, where there was nothing like what was described above. (Wrangel even personally ordered Rev. Vladimir Vostokov to stop his public anti-Jewish sermons.)

In July 1920, Shulim Bezpalov, the aforementioned Jewish millionaire, wrote from Paris to Wrangel in the Crimea: "We must save our Motherland. She will be saved by the children of the soil and industrialists. We must give away 75% of our revenue until the value of ruble has recovered and normal life rebuilt."[87]

Yet it was already too late….

Still, a part of the Jewish population of the Crimea chose to evacuate with Wrangel's army.[88]

True, the White Movement was in desperate need of the support by the Western public opinion, which in turn largely depended on the fate of Russian Jewry. It needed that support, yet, as we saw, it had fatally and unavoidably developed a hostility toward the Jews and later it was not able to prevent pogroms. As Secretary of State for War, Winston Churchill "was the major advocate of the Allied intervention in Russia and military aid to the White armies." Because of the pogroms, Churchill appealed directly to Denikin: "my goal of securing the support in the Parliament for the Russian national movement will be incomparably more difficult," if the pogroms are not stopped. "Churchill also feared the reaction of powerful Jewish circles among the British elite."[89] Jewish circles in the USA held similar opinions [on the situation in Russia].

However, the pogroms were not stopped, which largely explains the extremely weak and reluctant assistance given by the Western powers to the White armies. And calculations by Wall Street naturally led it to support Bolsheviks as the more likely future rulers over Russia's riches. Moreover, the climate in the US and Europe was permeated by sympathy toward

those who claimed to be builders of a New World, with their grandiose plans and great social objective.

And yet, the behavior of the former Entente of Western nations during the entire Civil War is striking by its greed and blind indifference toward the White Movement — the successor of their wartime ally, Imperial Russia. They even demanded that the Whites join the Bolshevik delegation at the Versailles Peace Conference; then there was that delirious idea of peace negotiations with the Bolsheviks on the Princes' Islands. The Entente, which did not recognize any of the White governments officially, was hastily recognizing all those new national states emerging on the periphery of Russia — thus unambiguously betraying the desire for its dismemberment. The British hurried to occupy the oil-rich region of Baku; the Japanese claimed parts of the Far East and the Kamchatka Peninsula. The American troops in Siberia were more of hindrance than a help and actually facilitated the capture of Primorye by the Bolsheviks. The Allies even extorted payments for any aid they provided — in gold from Kolchak; in the South of Russia, in the form of Black Sea vessels, concessions and future obligations. (There were truly shameful episodes: when the British were leaving the Archangel region in the Russian north, they took with them some of the Tsar's military equipment and ammunition. They gave some of what they couldn't take to the Reds and sunk the rest in the sea — to prevent it from getting into the hands of the Whites!) In the spring of 1920, the Entente put forward an ultimatum to the White Generals Denikin and Wrangel demanding an end to their struggle against the Bolsheviks. (In the summer of 1920 France provided some material aid to Wrangel so that he could help Poland. Yet only six months later they were parsimoniously deducting Wrangel's military equipment as payment for feeding of those Russian soldiers who retreated to Gallipoli.)

We can judge about the actions of the few occupational forces actually sent by the Entente from a testimonial by Prince Grigory Trubetskoy, a serious diplomat, who observed the French Army during its occupation of Odessa in 1919: "French policies in the South of Russia in general and their treatment of issues of Russian statehood in particular were strikingly confused, revealing their gross misunderstanding of the situation."[90]

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The black streak of Jewish pogroms in Ukraine ran through the whole of 1919 and the beginning of 1920. By their scope, scale and atrocity, these pogroms immeasurably exceeded all the previous historical instances discussed in this book — the pogroms of 1881-1882, 1903, and 1905. Yu. Larin, a high-placed Soviet functionary, wrote in the 1920s that during the Civil War Ukraine saw "a very large number of massive Jewish pogroms far exceeding anything from the past with respect to the number of victims and *number of perpetrators.*" Vynnychenko allegedly said that "the pogroms would stop only when the Jews would stop being communists."[91]

There is no precise estimate of the number of victims of those pogroms. Of course, no reliable count could be performed in that situation, neither during the events, nor immediately afterwards. In the book, *Jewish Pogroms*, we read: "The number of murdered in Ukraine and Byelorussia between 1917 and 1921 is approximately 180,000-200,000…. The number of orphans alone, 300,000, bespeaks of the enormous scale of the catastrophe."[92]

The present-day *Jewish Encyclopedia* tells us that "by different estimates, from 70,000 to 180,000-200,000 Jews were killed."[94]

Compiling data from different Jewish sources, a modern historian comes up with 900 *mass* pogroms, of which: 40% by Petliura's Ukrainian Directorate troops ; 25% by the squads of the various Ukrainian "atamans"; 17% by Denikin's White Army troops; and 8.5% by the First Cavalry Army of Budyonny and other Red Army troops.[95]

Yet how many butchered lives are behind these figures!

Already during the Civil War, national and socialist Jewish parties began merging with the Reds. The "Fareynikte" [the United Jewish Socialist Worker's Party] turned into the "ComFareynikte" [Communist Jewish Socialist Worker's Party] and "adopted the communist program and together with the communist wing of the Bund formed the [All-Russian] "ComBund" in June 1920; in Ukraine, associates and members of the Fareynikte together with the Ukrainian ComBund formed the "ComFarband" (the Jewish Communist Union) which later joined the All-Russian Communist Party of Bolsheviks.[96] In 1919 in Kiev, the official Soviet press provided texts in three languages — Russian, Ukrainian and Yiddish.

"The Bolsheviks used these pogroms [in Ukraine] to their enormous advantage, they extremely skillfully exploited the pogroms in order to influence public opinion in Russia and abroad … in many Jewish and non-Jewish circles in Europe and America."[97]

Yet the Reds had the finger in the pie as well — and they were actually first ones. "In the spring of 1918, units of the Red Army, retreating from Ukraine, perpetrated pogroms using the slogan `Strike the Yids and the bourgeoisie ´"; "the most atrocious pogroms were carried out by the First Cavalry Army during its retreat from Poland in the end of August 1920."[98] Yet historical awareness of the pogroms carried out by the Red Army during the Civil War has been rather glossed over. Only a few condemning voices have spoken on the topic. Pasmanik wrote: "During the first winter of Bolshevik rule, the Red troops fighting under the red banner carried out several bloody pogroms, most notable of which were pogroms in Glukhov and Novgorod-Siverskiy. By number of victims, deliberate brutality, torture and abuse, those two had eclipsed even the Kalush massacre. Retreating before the advancing Germans, the Red troops were destroying Jewish settlements on their route."[99]

S. Maslov is also quite clear: "The march of the Budyonny's Cavalry Army during its relocation from the Polish to the Crimean Front was marked by thousands of murdered Jews, thousands of raped women and dozens of utterly razed and looted Jewish settlements…. In Zhytomyr, each new authority inaugurated its rule with a pogrom, and often repeatedly after each time the city changed hands again. The feature of all those pogroms — by Petliura's troops, the Poles, or the Soviets — was the large number of killed."[100] The Bogunskiy and Taraschanskiy regiments stood out in particular (though those two having came over to Budyonny from the Directorate); allegedly, those regiments were disarmed because of the pogroms and the instigators were hanged.

The above-cited socialist S. Schwartz concludes from his historical standpoint (1952): "During the revolutionary period, particularly during the Civil War, … anti-Semitism has grown

extraordinarily … and, especially in the South, spread extensively in the broad masses of the urban and rural population."[101]

Alas, the resistance of the Russian population to the Bolsheviks (without which we wouldn't have a right to call ourselves a people) had faltered and took wrong turns in many ways, including on the Jewish issue. Meanwhile the Bolshevik regime was touting the Jews and they were joining it, and the Civil War was more and more broadening that chasm between Reds and Whites.

"If the revolution in general has cleared Jewry of suspicion in counter-revolutionary attitude, the counter-revolution has suspected all Jewry of being pro-revolutionary." And thus, "the Civil War became an unbearable torment for Jewry, further consolidating them on the wrong revolutionary positions," and so "they failed to recognize the genuine redemptive essence of the White armies."[102]

Let's not overlook the general situation during the Civil War. "It was literally a chaos which released unbridled anarchy across Russia…. Anybody who wanted and was able to rob and kill was robbing and killing whoever he wanted…. Officers of the Russian Army were massacred in the hundreds and thousands by bands of mutinous rabble. Entire families of landowners were murdered …, estates … were burned; valuable pieces of art were pilfered and destroyed … in some places in manors all living things including livestock were exterminated. Mob rule spread terror … on the streets of cities. Owners of plants and factories were driven out of their enterprises and dwellings…. Tens of thousands people all over Russia were shot for the glory of the proletarian revolution …; others … rotted in stinking and vermin-infested prisons as hostages…. It was not a crime or personal actions that put a man under the axe but his affiliation with a certain social stratum or class. It would be an absolute miracle if, under conditions when whole human groups were designated for extermination, the group named `Jews´ remained exempt…. The curse of the time was that … it was possible to declare an entire class or a tribe `evil´…. So, condemning an entire social class to destruction … is called revolution, yet to kill and rob Jews is called a pogrom? … The Jewish pogrom in the South of Russia was a component of the All-Russian pogrom."[103]

Such was the woeful acquisition of all the peoples of Russia, including the Jews, after the successful attainment of equal rights, after the splendid Revolution of March, 1917, that both the general sympathy of Russian Jews toward the Bolsheviks and the developed attitude of the White forces toward Jews eclipsed and erased the most important benefit of a possible White victory — the sane evolution of the Russian state.

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Chapter 17: Emigration between the two World Wars

As a result of the October coup and the subsequent Civil War, hundreds of thousands Russian citizens emigrated abroad, some retreating in battles, others simply fleeing. Among those emigrants were the entire surviving combat personnel of the White Army, and many Cossacks. They were joined by the old nobility, who were so strikingly passive during the fateful revolutionary years, although their wealth was precisely in land or estates. Many former landowners, who failed to take their valuables with them, upon arrival to Europe had to become taxi drivers or waiters. There were merchants, industrialists, financiers, quite a few of whom had money safely deposited abroad, and ordinary citizens too, of whom not all were well-educated, but who could not bear to stay under Bolshevism.

Many emigrants were Russian Jews. "Of more than 2 million emigrants from the Soviet republics in 1918-1922 more than 200,000 were Jews. Most of them crossed the Polish and Romanian borders, and later emigrated to the USA, Canada, and the countries of South America and Western Europe. Many repatriated to Palestine."[1] The newly formed independent Poland played an important role. It had a large Jewish population of its own before the revolution, and now a part of those who left Poland during the war were returning there too. "Poles estimate that after the Bolshevik revolution" 200-300 thousand Jews "arrived in Poland from Russia."[2] (This figure could be explained not only by increased emigration, but also by the re-arrangement of the Russian-Polish border). However "the majority of the Jews who left Russia in the first years after the revolution settled in Western Europe. For example, around 100,000 Russian Jews had gathered in Germany by the end of World War I."[3]

"While Paris was, from the beginning, the political centre and unofficial capital of Russia-in-Exile., The second, so to say cultural capital of Russian emigration in Europe from the end of 1920 until the beginning of 1924, was Berlin (there was also an intense cultural life in the 1920s in the Russian quarters of Prague, which became … Russia-in-Exile's main university city)."[4] It was "easier to settle" in Berlin because of inflation. "On the streets of Berlin" you could see "former major industrialists and merchants, bankers and manufacturers,"[5] and many émigrés had capital there. Compared to other emigrants from Russia, Jewish emigrants had fewer problems with integration into the Diaspora life, and felt more confident there. Jewish emigrants were more active than Russians and generally avoided humiliating jobs. Mihkail Levitov, the commander of the Kornilov Regiment who had experienced all sorts of unskilled labour after emigration, told me: "Who paid us decently in Paris? Jews. Russian multi-millionaires treated their own miserably."

Both in Berlin and in Paris "the Jewish intelligentsia was prominent – lawyers, book publishers, social and political activists, scholars, writers and journalists"[6]; many of them were deeply assimilated, while Russian emigrants "from the capitals [Moscow and St. Petersburg]" mostly had liberal opinions which facilitated mutual amity between the two

groups (unlike the feeling between Jews and the Russian monarchist emigrants). The influence of Russian Jews in the entire cultural atmosphere of Russia-in-Exile between the two world wars was more than palpable. (Here it is proper to mention a very interesting series of collections, Jews in the Culture of Russia-in-Exile, published in Israel in 1990s and still continuing.[7]) Some Jewish families with a comfortable income opened Russian artistic salons, clearly demonstrating Jewish attachment to and immersion in Russian culture. There was a famously generous house of the Tsetlins in Paris. Many others, I. V. Gessen's (in Berlin), I. I. Fondaminsky-Bunakov (tireless in his "endless, selfless cares for Russian culture abroad"[8]), Sofia Pregel, Sonya Delone, Alexander and Salomeia Galpern, were constantly engaged in the burdensome business of providing assistance for impoverished writers and artists. They helped many, and not just the famous, such as Bunin, Remizov, Balmont, Teffi, but also unknown young poets and painters. (However, this help did not extend to "White" and monarchist emigrants, with whom there was mutual antagonism). Overall, among all the emigrants, Russian Jews proved themselves the most active in all forms of cultural and social enterprise. This was so striking that it was reflected in Mihail Osorgin's article, Russian Loneliness, printed in the Russian Zionist magazine Rassvet [Dawn], re-established abroad by V. Jabotinsky.

Osorgin wrote: "In Russia, there was not this 'Russian loneliness' neither in the social nor the revolutionary movement (I mean the depths and not just the surface); the most prominent figures who gave specific flavour to the whole movement … were Slavic Russians." But after emigration "where there is a refined spirituality, where there is deep interest in thought and art, where the calibre of man is higher, there a Russian feels national loneliness; on the other hand, where there are more of his kin, he feels cultural solitude. I call this tragedy the Russian loneliness. I am not at all an anti-Semite, but I am primarily a Russian Slav… My people, Russians, are much closer to me in spirit, in language and speech, in their specific national strengths and weaknesses. For me, it is precious to have them as my fellow thinkers and peers, or perhaps it is just more comfortable and pleasant. Although I can respect the Jew, the Tatar, the Pole in the multi-ethnic and not at all "Russian" Russia, and recognise each as possessing the same right to Russia, our collective mother, as I have; yet I myself belong to the Russian group, to that spiritually influential group which has shaped the Russian culture." But now "Russians abroad have faded and given up and surrendered the positions of power to another tribe's energy. Jews adapt easier – and good for them! I am not envious, I am happy for them. I am equally willing to step aside and grant them the honour of leadership in various social movements and enterprises abroad…. But there is one area where this 'Jewish empowerment' strikes me at the heart – charity. I do not know who has more money and diamonds, rich Jews or rich Russians. But I know for certain that all large charitable organizations in Paris and Berlin can help poor Russian emigrants only because they collect the money needed from generous Jewry. My experience of organizing soireés, concerts, meetings with authors has proven that appealing to rich Russians is a pointless and humiliating waste of time…. Just to soften the tone of such an 'anti-Semitic'

article, I will add that, in my opinion, the nationally-sensitive Jew can often mistake national sensitivity of a Slav for a spectre of anti-Semitism."[9]

Osorgin's article was accompanied by the editorial (most likely written by the editor-in-chief Jabotinsky based on the ideas expressed and with a similar style) to the effect that M.A. Osorgin "has no reason to fear that the reader of Rassvet would find anti-Semitic tendencies [in his article]. There was once a generation that shuddered at the word 'Jew' on the lips of a non-Jew. One of the foreign leaders of that generation said: 'The best favour the major press can give us is to not mention us.' He was listened to, and for a long time in progressive circles in Russia and Europe the word 'Jew' was regarded as an unprintable obscenity. Thank God, that time is over." We can assure Osorgin "of our understanding and sympathy…. However, we disagree with him on one point. He gives too much importance to the role of Jews in charity among refugees. First, this prominent role is natural. Unlike Russians, we were learning the art of living in Diaspora for a long time…. But there is a deeper explanation…. We have received much that is precious from the Russian culture; we will use it even in our future independent national art…. We, Russian Jews, are in debt to Russian culture; we have not come close to repaying that debt. Those of us that do what they can to help it survive during these hard times are doing what is right and, we hope, will continue doing so."[10]

However let us return to the years immediately after the revolution. "Political passions were still running high among Russian emigrants, and there was a desire to comprehend what had happened in Russia. Newspapers, magazines, book publishers sprung up."[11] Some rich men, usually Jews, financed this new liberal and more left-of-center Russian emigrant press. There were many Jews among journalists, newspaper and magazine editors, book publishers. A detailed record of their contribution can be found in The Book of Russian Jewry (now also in Jews in the Culture of Russia-in-Exile).

Of significant historical value among these are the twenty two volumes of I. V. Gessen's Archive of the Russian Revolution. Gessen himself, along with A. I. Kaminkov and V. D. Nabokov (and G. A. Landau after the latter's death), published a prominent Berlin newspaper Rul [Steering Wheel], "a kind of emigrant version of Rech [Speech]," but unlike Milyukov's brainchild, Josef Gessen's position was consistently patriotic. Rul often published articles by G. A. Landau and I. O. Levin, whom I have amply cited, and also articles by the famous literary critic U. I. Aikhenvald. The political spectrum of Berlin papers ranged from Rul on the right to the socialists on the left. A. F. Kerensky published Dni [Days], which provided a platform for such personalities as A. M. Kulisher-Yunius (author "of a number of sociological works" and a Zionist from Jabotinsky's circle), S. M. Soloveichik, the famous former Socialist Revolutionary O. C. Minor (he also wrote for the Prague Volya Rossii [Russia's Will]), and the former secretary of the Constituent Assembly M. V. Vishnyak. In 1921 U. O. Martov and R. A. Abramovich founded the Socialist Gerald in Berlin (it later

moved to Paris and then New York). F. I. Dan, D. U. Dalin, P. A. Garvi, and G. Y. Aranson worked on it among others.

V. E. Jabotinsky, whose arrival in Berlin (after three years in Jerusalem) coincided with the first wave of emigration, re-established Rassvet, first in Berlin and then in Paris, and also published his own novels. In addition "many Russian Jewish journalists lived in Berlin in 1920-1923, working in the local and international emigrant press." There we could find I. M. Trotsky from the defunct Russkoe Slovo [Russian Word], N. M. Volkovyssky, P. I. Zvezdich (who died at the hands of Nazis during the World War II), the Menshevik S. O. Portugeis from the St. Petersburg Den [Day] (he wrote under the pseudonym S. Ivanovich), the playwriter Osip Dymov-Perelman, and the novelist V. Y. Iretsky.[12]

Berlin also became the capital of Russian book publishing: "In 1922 all these Russian publishers released more Russian books and publications than there were German books published in the whole of Germany. Most of these publishers and booksellers were Jewish."[13] Most notable were the publishing houses of I. P. Ladyzhnikov, owned since the war by B. N. Rubinstein (classical, modern and popular scientific literature), of Z. I. Grzhebin (which had links to the Soviets, and so sold some of his works in the USSR), the publishing house, Word, established as early as 1919 and run by I. V. Gessen and A. I. Kaminka (collections of Russian classics, emigrant writers and philosophers, valuable historical and biographical works), and the artistically superb issues of Zhar-Ptitsa run by A. E. Kogan. Also there was Edges of A. Tsatskis, Petropolis of Y. N. Blokh, Obelisk of A. S. Kagan, Helicon of A.G. Vishnyak, and Scythians of I. Shteinberg. S. Dubnov's World History of the Jewish People was also published in Berlin in ten German volumes, and during the 1930s in Russian in Riga.

Riga and other cities in the once again independent Baltic countries (with their substantial Jewish populations) became major destinations of Jewish emigration. Moreover, "the only common language that Latvians, Estonians and Lithuanians shared was Russian," and so the Riga newspaper Segodnya [Today] (publishers Ya. I. Brams and B. Yu. Polyak) became "highly influential." "A large number of Russian-Jewish journalists" worked there: the editor M. I. Ganfman, and after his death M. S. Milrud; Segodnya Vecherom [Today Evening] was edited by B. I. Khariton (the latter two were arrested by the NKVD in 1940 and died in Soviet camps). V. Ziv, an economist, and M. K. Aizenshtadt (under the pen names of first Zheleznov, then Argus) wrote for the newspaper. Gershon Svet wrote from Berlin. Andrei Sedykh (Y. M. Tsvibak) was its Paris correspondent, Volkovyssky reported from Berlin, and L. M. Nemanov from Geneva.[14]

From the late 1920s, Berlin started to lose its position as the centre of emigrant culture because of the economic instability and the rise of Nazism. Rul had to close in 1931. Emigrants had dispersed with the "main wave going to France," especially to Paris which was already a major centre of emigration.

In Paris the main emigrant newspaper was Poslednie Novosti [Breaking News], founded " at the beginning of 1920 by the St. Petersburg barrister M. L. Goldstein. It was financed by M. S. Zalshupin," and in a year the newspaper was bought by "P. N. Milyukov…. While it was in a precarious position, the paper was significantly financially supported by M. M. Vinaver." "Milyukov's right hand" was A. A. Polyakov. Editorials and political articles were written by Kulisher-Yunius (who was arrested in 1942 in France and died in a concentration camp). The international news section was run by M. Yu. Berkhin-Benedictov, an acquaintance of Jabotinsky. The staff included the acerbic publicist S. L. Polyakov-Litovtsev (who had only learnt "to speak and write Russian at fifteen"), B. S. Mirkin-Getsevich (who wrote as Boris Mirsky), the noted Kadet [Constitutional Democrat] publicist Pyotr Ryss and others. Poslednie Novosti published the satirical articles of I. V. Dioneo-Shklovsky and the popular science of Yu. Delevsky (Ya. L. Yudelevsky). The best humorists were V. Azov (V. A. Ashkenazi), Sasha Cherny (A. M. Gliksberg), the "king of humour" Don-Aminado (Shpolyansky). Poslednie Novosti had the widest circulation of all emigrant newspapers.[15] Shulgin called it "the citadel of political Jewishness and philo-Semitic Russians."[16] Sedykh regarded this opinion as an "obvious exaggeration." The political tension around the paper also stemmed from the fact that immediately after the Civil War it was dedicated to "disclosure" and sometimes outright condemnation of the Volunteer Army. Sedykh noted that in Paris "there was not only a political divide, but also a national one"; "Milyukov's editorial team included many Russian-Jewish journalists," while "Jewish names virtually never appeared on the pages of the right-wing Vozrozhdenie [Rebirth] (with the exception of I. M. Bikerman).[17] (Vozrozhdenie was founded later than the other papers and ceased operation in 1927, when its benefactor Gukasov fired the main editor P. B. Struve.)

The leading literary-political magazine Sovremennye Zapiski [Contemporary Notes], published in Paris from 1920 to 1940, was established and run by Socialist Revolutionaries, N. D. Avksentiev, I. I. Fondaminsky-Bunakov, V. V. Rudnev, M. V. Vishnyak and A. I. Gukovsky. Sedykh noted that "out of [its] five editors … three were Jews. In 70 volumes of the Sovremennye Zapiski we see fiction, articles on various topics and the memoirs of a large number of Jewish authors." Illyustrirovannaya Rossia [Illustrated Russia] was published by the St. Petersburg journalist M. P. Mironov, and later by B. A. Gordon (earlier the owner of Priazovsky Krai).[18] Its weekly supplement "gave the readers 52 pieces of classic or contemporary emigrant literature each year." (The literary emigrant world also included many prominent Russian Jews, such as Mark Aldanov, Semyon Yushkevich, the already mentioned Jabotinsky and Yuly Aikhenvald, M. O. Tsetlin (Amari). However, the topic of Russian emigrant literature cannot be examined in any detail here due to its immenseness.)

Here I would like to address the life of Ilya Fondaminsky (born in 1880). Himself from a prosperous merchant family and married in his youth to the granddaughter of the millionaire tea trader V. Y. Vysotsky, he nonetheless joined the Socialist Revolutionaries (SRs) and "sacrificed a large part of his wealth and his wife's inheritance to the revolution"[19] by buying weaponry. He worked towards the outbreak of the All-Russian political strike in 1905

and during the uprising he served in the headquarters of the SRs. He emigrated from Russia to Paris in 1906, where he became close to D. Merezhkovsky and Z. Gippius and developed an interest in Christianity. He returned to St. Petersburg in April 1917. In the summer of 1917 he was the commissar of the Black Sea Fleet, and later a delegate in the Constituent Assembly, fleeing after it was disbanded. From 1919 he lived in Paris, France, during the period under discussion. He devoted much time and effort to Sovremennye Zapiski, including publication of a series of articles titled The Ways of Russia. He played an active role in emigrant cultural life and provided all possible support to Russian writers and poets. For a while he even managed to maintain a Russian theatre in Paris. "His passion, many-sidedness, energy and selflessness … were without parallel among emigrants."[20] He estranged himself from the SRs and joined Christian Democrats. Along with the like-minded G. P. Fedotov and F. A. Stepun he began to publish the Christian Democratic Novy Grad [New City]. "He grew ever closer to Orthodoxy during these years."[21] "In June 1940 he fled Paris from the advancing German forces," but came back and was arrested in July1941and sent to Compiegne camp near Paris; "by some accounts, he converted to Christianity there. In 1942 he was deported to Auschwitz and killed."[22]

Between 1920 and 1924, the most important forum for purely Jewish issues was the Paris weekly, Jewish Tribune, published in both French and Russian with the prominent participation of M. M. Vinaver and S. B. Pozner. It published articles by many of the aforementioned journalists from other newspapers.

Novoe Russkoe Slovo [New Russian Word] was founded in 1910 in the United States and added its voice from across the ocean. Its publisher from 1920 was V. I. Shimkin and the main editor (from 1922) was M. E. Veinbaum. Veinbaum remembered: "The newspaper was often criticised, and not without reason. But gradually it earned the reader's confidence."[23](Its masthead now proudly boasts: "the oldest Russian newspaper in the world"; it is even two years older than Pravda. All the others have died out at various times, for various reasons.)

Right-wing or nationalist Russian newspapers appeared in Sofia, Prague, and even Suvorin's Novoe Vremya [New Times] continued in Belgrade as Vechernee Vremya [Evening Times], but they all either collapsed or withered away without leaving a lasting contribution. (The publisher of Rus in Sofia was killed.) The Paris Vozrozhdenie of Yu. Semenov "did not shirk from anti-Semitic outbursts"[24] (but not under Struve's short reign).

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Those who left soon after the Bolshevik victory could not even imagine the scale of inferno that broke out in Russia. It was impossible to believe in rumours. Testimonies from the White camp were mostly ignored. This changed when several Russian democratic journalists (the Constitutional Democrat (Kadet) A. V. Tyrkova-Williams, the socialist E. D. Kuskova (exiled from the USSR in 1922), and the escaped SR S. S. Maslov began to inform the stunned

emigrant public about rapid growth of grass-root anti-Semitism in Soviet Russia: "Judeophobia is one of the most acrid features of modern Russia. Perhaps even the most acrid. Judeophobia is everywhere: North, South, East, and West. It is shared regardless of intellect, party membership, tribe, age…. Even some Jews share it."[25]

These claims were at first met with suspicion by Jews who had emigrated earlier – what's the reason for this anti-Semitism? The Jewish Tribune initially rejected these claims: "generally, Russian Jewry suffered from Bolshevism perhaps more than any other ethnic group in Russia"; as to the "familiar identification of Jews and commissars" – we all know that it is the work of the [anti-Semitic] "Black Hundreds." The old view, that anti-Semitism resides not in the people but in Tsarism, began to transform into another, that the Russian people are themselves its carriers. Therefore, Bolsheviks should be credited for the suppression of popular "Black Hundred" attitudes in Russia. (Others began to excuse even their capitulation at Brest [at which Russia ceded large amounts of territory to the Kaiser's German military]. The Jewish Tribune in 1924 dusted off even such argument: "the Russian revolution of 1917, when it reached Brest-Litovsk, prevented the much greater and more fateful betrayal planned by Tsarist Russia."[26])

Yet the information was gradually confirmed; moreover, anti-Jewish sentiments spread over a large segment of Russian emigration. The Union for Russian Salvation (dedicated to crown prince Nikolai Nikolaevich) produced leaflets for distribution in the USSR in a manner like this: "To the Red Army. The Jews have ruled Great Russia for seven years…." "To Russian workers. You were assured that you would be the masters of the country; that it will be the 'dictatorship of the proletariat.' Where is it then? Who is in power in all the cities of the republic?" Of course, these leaflets did not reach the USSR, but they scared and offended Jewish emigrants.

S. Litovtsev wrote: "In the beginning of 1920s, anti-Semitism among emigrants became almost an illness, a sort of delirium tremens."[27] But it was a broader attitude as many in Europe during the first years after the Bolshevik victory rejected and damned the Jews, so that "the identification of Bolshevism with Judaism became a widespread part of European thought. It is ridiculous to assert that it is only anti-Semites preach this social-political heresy."[28] But could it be that the conclusions of Dr. Pasmanik were somehow premature? Yet this is what he wrote in 1922: "In the whole civilised world, among all nations and social classes and political parties, it is the established opinion now that Jews played the crucial role in the appearance and in all the manifestations of Bolshevism. Personal experience tells that this is the opinion not only of downright anti-Semites, but also … that representatives of the democratic public … reference these claims, i.e., to the role of Jews not only in Russian Bolshevism, but also in Hungary, Germany and everywhere else it has appeared. At the same time, the downright anti-Semites care little for truth. For them all Bolsheviks are Jews, and all Jews are Bolsheviks."[29]

Bikerman wrote a year later: “Waves of Judeophobia now roll over nations and peoples, with no end in sight”; “not just in Bavaria or Hungary … not only in the nations formed from the ruins of the once great Russia … but also in countries separated from Russia by continents and oceans and untouched by the turmoil…. Japanese academics came to Germany to get acquainted with anti-Semitic literature: there is interest in us even on distant islands where almost no Jews live…. It is precisely Judeophobia – the fear of the Jew-destroyer. Russia’s miserable fate serves as the material evidence to frighten and enrage.”[30]

In the collective declaration To the Jews of the World! the authors warn: “Never have so many clouds gathered above the Jewish people.”[31]

Should we conclude that these authors exaggerated, that they were too sensitive? That they imagined a non-existent threat? Yet doesn’t the abovementioned warning about “anti-Semitic literature in Germany” sound very scary – in retrospect, from our historical perspective?

“The opinion that Jews created Bolshevism” was already so widespread in Europe (this was the “average opinion of French and English philistines,” Pasmanik notes) that it was supported even by Plekhanov’s son-in-law, George Bato, who claims in his book[32] that Jews are inherently revolutionaries: “as Judaism preaches an ideal of social justice on earth … it has to support revolution.” Pasmanik cites Bato: “Over the centuries … Jews have always been against the established order…. This does not mean that Jews carried out all revolutions, or that they were always the sole or even main instigators; they help the revolutions and participate in them”; “One can responsibly claim, as many Russian patriots, often from very progressive circles, do, that Russia now agonizes under the power of Jewish dictatorship and Jewish terror”; “Impartial analysis of the worldwide situation shows the rebirth of anti-Semitism, not so much against Jews as individuals, as against the manifestations of the Jewish spirit.”[33] The Englishman Hilaire Belloc[34] similarly wrote about “the Jewish character of Bolshevik revolution,” or simply: “the Jewish revolution in Russia.” Pasmanik adds that “anyone who has lived in England recently knows that Belloc’s opinion is not marginal.” The books of both authors (Bato and Belloc) “are enormously popular with the public”; “journalists all over the world argue that all the destructive ideas of the past hundred years are spread by Jews, through precisely Judaism.”[35]

“We must defend ourselves,” Pasmanik writes, “because we cannot deny obvious facts…. We cannot just declare that the Jewish people are not to blame for the acts of this or that individual Jew…. Our goal … is not only an argument with anti-Semites, but also a struggle with Bolshevism … not only to parry blows, but to inflict them on those proclaiming the Kingdom of Ham…. To fight against Ham is the duty of Japheth and Shem, and of Helenes, and Hebrews.” Where should we look for the real roots of Bolshevism? “Bolshevism is primarily an anti-cultural force … it is both a Russian and a global problem, and not the machination of the notorious ‘Elders of Zion.’”[36]

The Jews acutely realized the need to "defend themselves" in part because the post-war Europe and America were flooded with Protocols of the Elders of Zion, suddenly and virtually instantly. These were five editions in England in 1920, several editions in both Germany and France; half a million copies in America were printed by Henry Ford. "The unheard-of success of the Protocols, which were translated into several languages, showed how much the Bolshevik revolution was believed to be Jewish.[37]" English researcher Norman Cohn wrote: "in the years immediately after the World War I, when the Protocols entered mainstream and thundered across the world, many otherwise entirely sensible people took them completely seriously."[38] The London Times and Morning Post of that time vouched for their authenticity, although by August 1921 the Times published a series of articles from its Istanbul correspondent, Philipp Greaves, who sensationally demonstrated the extensive borrowing of the text in the Protocols from Maurice Jolie's anti-Napoleon III pamphlets (The Dialogue in Hell between Machiavelli and Montesquieu, 1864). At that time the French police managed to confiscate every single copy of the infamous pamphlet.

The Protocols came to the West from a Russia overtaken by the Civil War.

A journalistic fraud produced in the early 20th century (in 1900 or 1901), the Protocols were first published in 1903 in St. Petersburg. The mastermind behind them is thought to be P. I. Rachkovsky, the 1884-1902 head of the Foreign Intelligence unit of the Police Department; their production is attributed to Matvei Golovinsky, a secret agent from 1892 and son of V. A. Golovinsky, who was a member of Petrashevsky Circle. [The latter was a Russian literary discussion group of progressive-minded commoner-intellectuals in St. Petersburg organized by Mikhail Petrashevsky, a follower of the French utopian socialist Charles Fourier. Among the members were writers, teachers, students, minor government officials, army officers. While differing in political views, most of them were opponents of the Tsarist autocracy and the Russian serfdom. Among those connected to the circle were writers Dostoyevsky]. (Still, new theories about the origin of the Protocols appear all the time). Although the Protocols were published and re-published in 1905, 1906, 1911, they had little success in pre-revolutionary Russia: "they did not find broad support in Russian society…. The Court did not give support to distribution either."[39] After many failed attempts, the Protocols were finally presented to Nicholas II in 1906 and he was very impressed. His notes on the margins of the book included: "What a foresight!', 'What precise execution!', "It is definitely them who orchestrated the [revolutionary] events of 1905!', 'There can be no doubt about their authenticity.' But when the right-wing activists suggested using the Protocols for the defence of the monarchy, Prime Minister P. A. Stolypin ordered a secret investigation into their origins. It showed they were a definite fabrication. The monarch was shocked by Stolypin's report, but wrote firmly: "remove the Protocols from circulation. You cannot defend a noble cause with dirty means."[40] And since then "Russia's rulers' dismissal of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion came into force: no reference to the 'Protocols' was allowed … even during the Beilis Trial."[41]

However "1918 changed everything for the Protocols.[42]" After the Bolsheviks seized power, after the murder of the royal family and the beginning of the Civil War, the popularity of the Protocols surged. They were printed and re-printed by the OsvAg [White Army counter-intelligence agency in the South of Russia] in Novocherkassk, Kharkov, Rostov-on-Don, Omsk, Khabarovsk, Vladivostok, and were widely circulated among both the Volunteer Army and the population (and later Russian emigrants, especially in Sofia and Belgrade).

"After the Bolshevik victory the selling of Protocols was banned in Russia" and become a criminal offence, but "in Europe the Protocols brought in by the White emigration played an ominous role in the development of right-wing ideology, especially National Socialism in Germany."[43]

Exposure of the Protocols as forgery, and general denial of identity between Bolsheviks and Jews constituted a major share of liberal emigrant journalism of the 1920s and 1930s. We see several prominent Russians there: Milyukov, Rodichev, Burtsev and Kartashev.

A.V. Kartashev, historian of religion, Orthodox theologian and at the same time, a public figure, wrote about the unacceptability of anti-Semitism for a Christian in the pre-revolutionary collection Shchit [Shield],[44] which I have often cited. In 1922, in emigration, he wrote the foreword to Yu. Delevsky's book on the Protocols.[45] In 1937 Burtsev too asked him to write a foreword for his book. Kartashev wrote in it: "A man with common sense, good will and a little scientific discipline cannot even discuss the authenticity of this police and journalistic forgery, though certainly a talented forgery, able to infect the ignorant…. It's unfair to continue supporting this obvious deceit after it has been so unambiguously exposed. Yet it is equally unfair to do the opposite, to exploit the easy victory over the Protocols authenticity to dismiss legitimate concerns…. A half-truth is a lie. The whole truth is that the Jewish question is posed before the world as one of the tragic questions of history. And it cannot be resolved either by savage pogroms, or by libel and lies, but only by honest and open efforts of all mankind. Pogroms and slander make a sensible and honest raising of the question more difficult, degrading it to outright stupidity and absurdity. They confuse the Jews themselves, who constantly emphasize their 'oppressed innocence' and expect from everybody else nothing but sympathy and some sort of obligatory Judeophilia." Kartashev certainly regarded debunking of this "sensational apocrypha" as a "moral duty," but also thought that "in washing out the dust of Protocols from the eyes of the ignorant, it is unacceptable to impair their vision anew by pretending that this obliterates the Jewish question itself."[46]

Indeed, the "Jewish question" cannot be removed by either books or articles. Consider the new reality faced in the 1920s by Jews in the Baltic countries and Poland. In Baltics, although "Jews managed to maintain for a while their influential position in trade and industry"[47] they felt social pressure. "A good half of Russian Jewry lived in the newly independent states…. New states trumpet their nationalism all the louder the less secure they feel."[48]

There "Jews feel themselves besieged by a hostile, energetic and restless popular environment. One day, it is demanded that there be no more Jews percentage-wise in the institutions of higher learning than in the army … the next, the air of everyday life becomes so tense and stressful that Jews can no longer breathe…. In the self-determined nations, the war against Jews is waged by the society itself: by students, military, political parties, and ordinary people." I. Bikerman concluded that "in leading the charge for self-determination, Jews were preparing the ground for their own oppression by virtue of higher dependence on the alien society."[49] "The situation of Jews in Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania is literally tragic. Yesterday's oppressed are today's oppressors, what is more – extremely uncouth oppressors, entirely unashamed of their lack of culture."[50]

So it transpired "that the breakup of Russia also meant the breakup of Russian Jewry" as the history paradoxically showed that the Jews were better off in the united Russian Empire despite all the oppression. So now in these splintered border countries "Jews became the faithful guardians of the Russian language, Russian culture, impatiently waiting for the restoration of the great Russia. Schools that still teach in Russian became filled with Jewish children," to the exclusion of learning the languages of the newly-formed states. "In these tiny countries, the Russian Jew, accustomed to life in the open swathes of a great empire, feels uncomfortable, squeezed and diminished in his social status, despite all the civil rights and autonomy…. Indeed our people's fate is bound up with the fate of the great Russia."[51]

Still, the position of Jewry in the circles of international post-war politics was strong, especially in Paris, and in particular regarding Zionism. "In July 1922 the League of Nations recognised the World Zionist Organization as the 'Jewish Agency,'" which first and foremost represented the interests of Zionists, and secondly of non-Zionists, and also provided support to the European Jews.[52]

Bikerman accused the Zionists of seeing a "fragmented Russia … as an ideal. This is why the organization of Russian Zionists calls itself not Russian, but Russo-Ukrainian. This is why the Zionists and related Jewish groups so assiduously fraternized with the Ukrainian separatists."[53]

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After the Civil War, Soviet Russia sank into a heavy silence. From this point and for decades to follow, all independent voices were squashed and only the official line could be heard. And the less was heard from Russia, the louder was the voice of emigration. All of them, from anarchists to monarchists, looked back in pain and argued intensely: who and to what extent was to blame for what had happened?

Discussion developed within emigrant Jewry as well.

In 1923 Bikerman noted: "Jews answer everything with a familiar gesture and familiar words: we know, we're to blame; whenever something goes wrong, you'll look for a Jew and find

one. Ninety percents of what is written in the contemporary Jewish press about Jews in Russia is just a paraphrase of this stereotype. And because it's impossible that we're always to blame for everything, Jews take from this the flattering and at first glance quite convenient conclusion that we're always and everywhere in the right."[54]

However, consider: "Before the revolution, the Jewish society passionately argued that a revolution would save the Jews, and we still ardently adhere to this position." When the Jewish organizations gather resources in the West to aid their co-ethnics, suffering in the USSR, they "denounce, belittle, and slander everything about pre-revolutionary Russia, including the most positive and constructive things; See, "the Bolshevik Russia has now become the Promised Land," egalitarian and socialist. Many Jews who emigrated from Russia settled in the United States, and "pro-Bolshevik attitudes spread quickly among them."[55] The general Jewish mood was that Bolshevism was better than restoration of monarchy. It was widely believed "that the fall of Bolshevism in Russia would inevitably engender a new wave of bloody Jewish pogroms and mass extermination…. And it is on this basis that Bolshevism is preferred as the lesser evil."[56]

Then, as if to confirm that Bolsheviks are changing for the better, that they can learn, the NEP came! They've loosened their suffocating grip on the economy, and that made them all the more acceptable. "First NEP, then some concessions – hopefully, it'll all work out for us."[57]

We cannot call the entire Jewish emigration pro-Bolshevik. Yet they did not see the Bolshevik state as their main enemy, and many still sympathized with it.

Yet a noteworthy incident, mockingly described in Izvestiya, happened to Goryansky, a Jewish emigrant writer.[58] In 1928, the already famous Babel (and already well-known for his links to the Cheka) was "temporarily residing" in Paris to muster creative inspiration. While in the Cafe Rotonda he noticed his "old acquaintance," probably from Odessa, who magnanimously offered his hand to him: "Greetings, Goryansky." But Goryansky stood up and contemptuously turned away from the offered hand.

Rise of Hitlerism in Germany naturally and for a long time reinforced the preference for Bolshevism in the social mind of the European Jewry.

The First International Jewish Congress took place in Vienna in August 1936. M. Vishnyak disapprovingly suggested that the collective attitude toward the Bolshevik regime was perfectly exemplified by the opinion of N. Goldman: if all sorts of freedom-loving governments and organizations "flatter and even fawn before the Bolsheviks … why shouldn't supporters of Jewish ethnic and cultural independence follow the same path? … Only Moscow's open support for anti-Jewish violence in Palestine slightly cooled the Congress leaders' disposition toward the Soviet state. Even then … they only protested the banning of Hebrew … and the banning of emigration from the USSR to Palestine, and, finally, they objected to the continuing suffering of Zionists in political prisons and concentration

camps. Here N. Goldman found both the necessary words and inspiration."[59] In 1939 on the eve of the World War II, S. Ivanovich noted: "It cannot be denied that among emigrant Russian Jews" the mood was to "rely on the perseverance of the Soviet dictatorship" if only to prevent pogroms.[60]

What of Jewish Bolsheviks? I. Bikerman: "Prowess doesn't taint – that is our attitude to Bolsheviks who were raised among us and to their satanic evil. Or the modern version: Jews have the right to have their own Bolsheviks"; "I have heard this declaration a thousand times"; at a meeting of Jewish emigrants in Berlin "one after the other, a respected Kadet, a Democrat, a Zionist ascended the podium" and each "proclaimed this right of Jews to have their own Bolsheviks … their right to monstrosity."[61]

"Here are the consequences of these words: Jewish opinion across the world turned away from Russia and accepted the Bolsheviks"; "when a famous, old, and well respected Jewish public figure – a white crow – suggested to a high Jewish dignitary in one of the European capitals organizing a protest against the executions of Orthodox priests in Russia [i.e. in the USSR], the latter, after reflecting on the idea, said that it would mean struggling against Bolshevism, which he considers an impossible thing to do because the collapse of Bolshevik regime would lead to anti-Jewish pogroms."[62]

But if they can live with Bolsheviks, what do they think of the White movement? When Josef Bikerman spoke in Berlin in November 1922 at the fifth anniversary of the founding of the White Army, Jewish society in general was offended and took this as a slight against them.

Meanwhile, Dr. D. S. Pasmanik (who fought on the German front until February 1917, then in the White Army until May 1919, when he left Russia) had already finished and in 1923 published in Paris his book Russian Revolution and Jewry: Bolshevism and Judaism (I cited it here), where he passionately argued against the commonplace explanation that Bolshevism originated from the Jewish religion. "The identification of Judaism with Bolshevism is a grave global danger." In 1923, together with I. M. Bikerman, G. A. Landau, I. O. Levin, D. O. Linsky (also an ex-member of the White Army) and V. C. Mandel, Pasmanik founded the National Union of Russian Jews Abroad. This group published an appeal To the Jews of the World! in the same year, and soon after published a collection Russia and the Jews in Berlin.

Here is how they describe the task they undertook and their feelings. Pasmanik said: "The unspeakable pain of the Jew and the unending sorrow of the Russian citizen" motivated this work. "Because of the dark events of the recent years, it was difficult to find a balanced point of view on both Russian and Jewish questions. We … attempted to merge the interests of the renewed Russia and of the afflicted Russian Jewry."[63] Linsky: "Unfathomed sorrow" dwells in the souls of those who "realize their Jewishness while similarly identifying as Russians." It is much easier when "one of the two streams of your national consciousness dries up, leaving you only a Jew or only a Russian, thus simplifying your position toward Russia's tragic experience….The villainous years of the revolution killed … the shoots of hope"

for rapprochement between Jews and Russians that had appeared just before the war; now "we witness active … Russo-Jewish divergence."[64] Levin: "It is our duty to honestly and objectively examine the causes of and the extent of Jewish involvement in the revolution. This … might have certain effect on future relations between Russians and Jews."[65] The co-authors of the collection rightly warned Russians not to mix up the meaning of the February Revolution and Jewish involvement in it. Bikerman if anything minimised this involvement (the power balance between the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Soldiers' and Workers' Deputies and the Provisional Government was for the most part unclear to contemporaries). However he thought that after the October Bolshevik coup "the Jewish right to have their Bolsheviks implies a duty to have also their right-wingers and extreme right-wingers, the polar opposites of the Bolsheviks."[66] Pasmanik: "In all its varieties and forms, Bolshevik communism … is an evil and true foe of Jewry, as it is first of all the enemy of personal identity in general and of cultural identity in particular."[67] "Bound by a plethora of intimate connections to our motherland, to its political system, economy and culture, we cannot flourish while the country disintegrates around us."[68]

Obviously, these authors were fully aware of the significance of the Russian catastrophe. In describing those years, I heavily relied on the work of these people with the hope that their bitter, but not at all "self-hating," reflections can finally be understood and comprehended in their entirety.

Their 1923 Proclamation stated: "The National Union of Russian Jews Abroad firmly believes that the Bolsheviks epitomize the greatest evil for the Jews as well as for all other peoples of Russia…. It is time for the Jew to stop tremble at the thought of going against the revolution…. Rather, the Jew should fear going against his motherland [Russia] and his people [Jewish]."[69]

However, the authors of Russia and the Jews saw the Jewish national consciousness of the early 1920s as something very different from what they've thought it should have been. "Almost all circles and classes of Russian society are now engaged in grievous self-reflections, trying to comprehend what has happened….Whether these self-accusations and admissions of guilt are fair or not, they at least reveal the work of thought, conscience, and aching hearts…. But it would be no exaggeration to claim that such spiritual work is the least noticeable among the Jewish intelligentsia, which is no doubt a symptom of certain morbidity…. For an outsider it appears that a typical Jewish intellectual has no concerns."[70] For this intellectual "everyone else is to blame – the government, the generals, the peasants, etc. He has nothing to do with all this…. In no way did he forge his own destiny and the destinies of those around him; he is just a passersby, hit on the head by a falling brick"; "so they were complicit in destroying [the world around them], but after it was finished they became unaware of their role in it."[71]

Jewish Bolsheviks was a particular pain for the authors. "A sin that carries the seed of its own nemesis, … what greater affliction is there for a people than to see its sons debauched?"[72]

"It is not just that the Russian upheaval needed people of a certain sort for its perpetuation, or that the Jewish society provided this sort of people; what is most important is that they were not rebuffed, did not meet enough opposition from within their own society."[73] "It is our duty to shoulder the struggle specifically against the Jewish Bolsheviks, against all kinds of YevSeks [the 'Jewish Section,' the name given to officials appointed by the Soviets to deal with Jewish affairs], and against Jewish commissars in general."[74]

It should be noted that these authors were not alone in arguing that Russian (and now emigrant) Jews should fight against the Bolsheviks. From the pages of the Jewish Tribune: "If Bolshevism was swept from power in Russia by a wave of popular wrath, Jewry might be held, in the eyes of the masses, responsible for prolonging Bolshevism's lifespan…. Only active participation in the struggle to liquidate Bolshevism can secure Jews a safe position in the common cause of saving Russia."[75]

Bikerman warned: if we support the Bolsheviks "on the principle that your own shirt is closer to the body" then "we should not forget that we thus allow the Russian to take care of his own shirt that is closer to his body; that it justifies the call, 'Slaughter Yids, Save Russia.'"[76]

What of the Jewish attitudes toward the White Army? "This unworthy attitude that Jews have towards people who have taken upon their shoulders the endlessly difficult task of fighting for Russia, for the millions of the sheepish and weak-willed, points out to the complete moral disintegration, to a sort of perversion of mind…." While "all of us, Jews and non-Jews alike, placed ourselves obediently under the communist yoke and our backs under the whip, there were some Russians, courageous and proud, who overcame all obstacles, gathered from what remained of the breached and ripped apart fronts [of World War I], consolidated and raised the banner of resistance…. Just that they were willing to fight under these circumstances alone immortalizes them for the history. And these people became an object for abuse" on the side of so many Jews, "libeled by every loquacious tongue"; so "instead of appreciation the tragedy, we see epidemic mindlessness, endless laxity of speech, and triumphant superficiality." And yet "the Russia for which the Whites fought is not alien to us; it is 'our shirt' too."[77] "Jewry should have fought for the White cause as for the cause of Jewish salvation, for … only in the restoration and swift rescue of Russian statehood can Jews find salvation from that death that has never been as close as in these days."[78]

(Death was indeed approaching, although from another direction).

Who would deny these conclusions today, after decades of Soviet regime? But at that time, only few authors, Jewish or Russian, could see so far ahead. The Jewish emigrant community as a whole rejected these thoughts. And thus they had failed the test of history. It might be objected that it did not cause Jewry a noticeable, significant harm, and certainly it was not the Holocaust brought by Hitlerism. Yes, it did not bring commeasurable physical harm, but, historically, its spiritual harm was noticeable; take, for instance, the success of Bolshevism in the expulsion of the Jewish religion from the country where it had once deeply spread its

sacred roots. And there was more – the Jews, by "betting on Bolshevism" influenced the overall course of events in Europe.

The authors of the Russia and the Jews appealed in vain: "In the many centuries of Jewish dispersion … there has not been a political catastrophe as deeply threatening to our national existence as the breaking of the Russian Power, for never have the vital forces of the Jewish people been as united as in the bygone, living Russia. Even the breakup of the Caliphate can scarcely compare with the current disaster."[79] "For the united Russian Jewry the breakup of Russia into separate sovereign states is a national calamity."[80] "If there is no place for the Jews in the great spaces of the Russian land, in the boundlessness of the Russian soul, then there is no space [for Jews] anywhere in the world…. Woe to us, if we do not wise up."[81]

Of course, by the very end of the 20th century we can easily reject these grim prophecies, if only as a matter of fact – just as enough space has been found on earth for formerly Russian Jews, so a Jewish state has been founded and secured itself, while Russia still lies in ruin, so powerless and humiliated. The warnings of the authors on how Russia should be treated already appear a great exaggeration, a failed prophecy. And now we can reflect on these words only in regard of the spiritual chord that so unexpectedly bound the two our peoples together in History.

"If Russia is not our motherland, then we are foreigners and have no right to interfere in her national life."[82] "Russia will survive; her renaissance must become our national concern, the concern of the entire … Russian Jewry."[83] And in conclusion: "The fate of Russian Jewry is inextricably linked to the fate of Russia; we must save Russia, if we want to save Jewry …. The Jews must fight the molesters of the great country shoulder to shoulder with all other anti-Bolshevik forces; a consolidated struggle against the common enemy will heal the rifts and substantially reduce the current dramatic and ubiquitous growth of anti-Semitism; only by saving Russia, can we prevent a Jewish catastrophe."[84]

Catastrophe! – this was said ten years before Hitler's ascension to power, eighteen years before his stunning sweep across the USSR and before the start of his program of Jewish extermination. Would it have been possible for Hitler to preach hatred of "Jews and communists" in Germany so easily and successfully, to claim Jews and communists are the same, if the Jews were among the most prominent and persistent opponents of the Soviet regime? The spiritual search of the authors of Russia and the Jews led them to prophetically sense the shadow of the impending Jewish Catastrophe, though erring in its geographical origin and failing to predict other fateful developments. Yet their dreadful warning remained unheard.

I am not aware of anything else close to Russia and the Jews in the history of Russian-Jewish relations. It shook the Jewish emigration. Imagine how hurtful it was to hear such things coming from Jewish lips, from within Jewry itself.

On the part of Russians, we must learn a lesson from this story as well. We should take Russia and the Jews as an example of how to love our own people and at the same time be able to speak about our mistakes, and to do so mercilessly if necessary. And in doing that, we should never alienate or separate ourselves from our people. The surest path to social truth is for each to admit their own mistakes, from each, from every side.

Having devoted much time and thought to these authors (and having dragged the reader along with me), I would like here to leave a brief record of their lives.

Josef Menassievich Bikerman (1867-1942) came from a poor petty bourgeois family. He attended a cheder, then a yeshiva, provided for himself from the age of fifteen; educated himself under difficult circumstances. In 1903 he graduated from the historical-philological faculty of the Imperial Novorossiya University (after a two-year-exclusion gap for participation in student unrest). He opposed Zionism as, in his opinion, an illusory and reactionary idea. He called on Jews to unite, without relinquishing their spiritual identity, with progressive forces in Russia to fight for the good of the common motherland. His first article was a large tract on Zionism published in the Russkoe Bogatstvo [Russian Treasure] (1902, issue 7), which was noticed and debated even abroad. In 1905 he was deeply involved into the Liberation movement. He worked in several periodicals: Syn Otechestva [Son of the Fatherland], Russkoe Bogatstvo, Nash Den [Our day], Bodroe Slovo [Buoyant Word]. As an emigrant he was printed in the Paris Vozrozhdenie, when it was run by P. B. Struve.

Daniil Samoilovich Pasmanik (1869-1930) was a son of Melamed (a teacher in a cheder). In 1923 he graduated from the medical faculty of Zurich University and then practiced medicine in Bulgaria for seven years. In 1899-1905 he was the freelance lecturer in the medical faculty at Geneva University. He joined Zionist movement in 1900 and became one of its leading theorists and publicists. He returned to Russia in 1905 and passed the medical license exam. He participated in the struggle for civil rights for Jews; he opposed the Bund and worked on the program for Poale-Zion; in 1906-1917 he was a member of the Central Committee of the Russian Zionist organization. He was a member of editorial boards of Evreiskaya Zhizn [Jewish Life], and then of Rassvet. He wrote many articles for Evreisky Mir [Jewish World] and the Jewish Encyclopaedia. He published his medical works in specialized journals in German and French. Pasmanik was in Vienna when the WWI broke out in 1914, from where he with great difficulty managed to return to Russia; he joined the army and served in field hospitals until February 1917. He joined the Kadets after the February Revolution; he supported General Kornilov and the White movement; in 1918-1919 he was involved in the White government of the Crimea, was elected chairman of the Union of the Jewish Communities of the Crimea. In 1919 he emigrated from Russia to France. In 1920-1922 in Paris he together with V. L. Burtsev edited the White émigré newspaper Obshchee Delo [The Common Cause]. Overall, he authored hundreds of articles and tens of books; the most notable of them include Wandering Israel: The Psychology of Jewry in Dispersion (1910), Fates of the Jewish People: The Problems of Jewish Society (1917), The Russian

Revolution and Jewry: Bolshevism and Judaism (1923) The Revolutionary Years in Crimea (1926), What Is Judaism? (French edition, 1930).

Isaak Osipovich Levin (1876-1944) was a historian and publicist. Before the revolution, he worked as a foreign affairs commentator for Russkie Vedomosti [Russian Journal] and for the P. B. Struve's magazine, Russkaya Mysl [Russian Thought]. He emigrated first to Berlin. He was a member of the Russian Institute of Science, worked in the Rul, Russkie Zapiski and in the historical-literary almanac Na Chuzhoi Storone [In the Foreign Land]; he regularly gave presentations (in particular on the topic of the rise of German anti-Semitism). He moved to Paris in 1931 or 1932. He was widowed and lived in poverty. Among his works are Emigration during the French Revolution and a book in French about Mongolia. During the German occupation he registered according to his "racial origins" as was required by authorities; he was arrested in the early 1943, for a short time was held in a concentration camp near Paris, then deported; he died in a Nazi concentration camp in 1944.

Grigory (Gavriel) Adolfovich Landau (1877-1941) was son of the well-known publicist and publisher A. E. Landau. He graduated from the law faculty of the St. Petersburg University in 1902. He wrote for periodicals from 1903 (the newspapers Voskhod [Sunrise], Nash Den, Evreiskoe Obozrenie [Jewish Observer], the magazines Bodroe Slovo, Evreisky Mir, Vestnik Evropy [European Herald], Sovremennik, Severnye Zapiski [Northern Notes], the yearly almanac Logos). He was one of the founders of the Jewish Democratic Group in 1904 and the Union for Equal Rights for Jews in Russia in 1905. He was an outstanding Kadet, member of the Central Committee of the Kadet Party. In August 1917 he participated in the Government Conference in Moscow; from December 1917 he was a member of the Executive Committee of the Jewish Community of Petrograd. He emigrated to Germany in 1919; from 1922 to 1931he was I. V. Gessen's deputy at Rul. Apart from Rul, he also wrote for the magazine, Russkaya Mysl, the weekly, Russia and the Slavs, the collection Chisla [Dates], etc. He often lectured at émigré evenings (in 1927 in the talk titled The Eurasian Delusion he criticised "eurasianism" as the movement contrary to the values of Russian history and leading to ideological Bolshevism). From Nazi Germany he fled for Latvia, where he worked for the Riga newspaper Segodnya [Today]. He was arrested by the NKVD in June 1941 and died in the Usollag camp (near Solikamsk) in November.[85] Among his works the most influential were Clownish Culture (in Nash Den, 1908), the article Twilight of Europe (Severnye Zapiski, 1914, issue 12), which antedated "much of what would later bestow worldwide fame on Oswald Spengler"[86] (and later a book with the same title (Berlin, 1923)), Polish-Jewish Relations (1915), On Overcoming Evil (in the collection book The Works of Russian Scholars Abroad, Berlin, 1923), The Byzantine and the Hebrew (Russkaya Mysl, 1923, issues 1 and 2), Theses Against Dostoevsky (Chisla, volume 6, Paris, 1932), Epigraphs (Berlin, 1927). Much of what he wrote was dismissed by contemporaries. He was too conservative in spirit to be accepted by progressive public. He was a sagacious thinker.

We could not find any substantial information about D. O. Linsky (he served in the White Army during the Civil War) or V. C. Mandel (active participant in Russian political life 1907-1918, he emigrated to Berlin and died in 1931).

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In Russia and the Jews the behavior of Jewish emigrants during 1920s was explicitly and harshly admonished. The authors called on their co-ethnics to "admit their own mistakes and not to judge the Great Russia in which they had lived and which they had made a home for hundreds of years"; "remember how they demanded justice for themselves and how upset they are when they are collectively accused for the acts of some individuals"[87]; Jews should not be afraid "to acknowledge some responsibility for all that has happened."[88] "First of all we must determine precisely our share of responsibility and so counter anti-Semitic slander….This is absolutely not about becoming accustomed to anti-Semitism, as claimed by some Jewish demagogues…. This admission is vital for us, it is our moral duty."[89] "Jewry has to pick righteous path worthy of the great wisdom of our religious teachings which will lead us to brotherly reconciliation with the Russian people…. to build the Russian house and the Jewish home so they might stand for centuries to come."[90]

But "we spread storms and thunder and expect to be cradled by gentle zephyrs…. I know you will shriek that I am justifying pogroms! … I know how much these people are worth, who think themselves salt of the earth, the arbiters of fate, and at the very least the beacons of Israel…. They, whose every whisper is about Black Hundreds and Black Hundreders, they themselves are dark people, their essence is black, viri obscure indeed, they were never able to comprehend … the power of creativity in human history…." It is imperative for us "to make less of a display of our pain, to shout less about our losses. It is time we understood that crying and wailing … is mostly [evidence] of emotional infirmity, of a lack of culture of the soul…. You are not alone in this world, and your sorrow cannot fill the entire universe … when you put on a display only your own grief, only your own pain it shows … disrespect to others' grief, to others' sufferings."[91]

It could have been said today, and to all of us.

These words cannot be obviated either by the millions lost in the prisons and camps of the GULag, nor by the millions exterminated in the Nazi death camps.

The lectures of the authors of Russia and the Jews at that year's National Union of Jews "were met with great indignation" on the part of emigrant Jewry. "Even when explicitly or tacitly accepting the truth of the facts and the analysis, many expressed indignation or surprise that anyone dared to bring these into the open. See, it was not the right time to speak of Jews, to criticise them, to determine their revolutionary misdeeds and responsibility, when Jewry has just suffered so much and may suffer even more in the future."[92] The collection's authors "were almost declared 'enemies of the [Jewish] people,' the abetters of reaction and allies of the pogromists."[93]

The Jewish Tribune replied them from Paris a few months later: "The question of 'Jewish responsibility for the Russian revolution' has hitherto only been posed by anti-Semites." But now "there is a whole penitent and accusative movement," apparently "we have to 'not only blame others, but also admit our own faults'"; yet there is nothing new apart from "the same old boring 'name counting' [of Jews among Bolsheviks]." "Too late … did Mr. Landau come to love" "the old 'statehood'"; "'penitent' Jews turned reactionaries"; their "words are incompatible with the dignity of the Jewish people … and are completely irresponsible."[94] Especially offensive was this attempt to "separate the 'popular' anti-Semitism from the 'official' one", attempting to prove that "the people, the society, the country – the entire populace hates the Jews and considers them the true culprit responsible for all national woes"; just like those who connived the pogroms, they repeat "the old canard about the 'popular anger.'"[95] Sometimes it descended into the outright abuse: "this group of Berlin journalists and activists, which has nearly disappeared from the Jewish public life by now … craves to put themselves into limelight again … and for that they could think of no better way than to attack their own compatriots, Russian Jews"; this "tiny group of loyalists Jews … are blinded by a desire to turn the wheel of history backwards," they write "indecencies," give "comical advice," take on themselves the "ridiculous role of healers to cure national wounds." They should remember that "sometimes it is better to stay quiet."[96]

One sophisticated modern critic could find a better assessment for that collection than a "severe hysteria." Both that attempt "and their later journey are genuine tragedies," in his opinion, and he explains this tragedy as a "self-hatred complex."[97]

Yet was Bikerman hateful when he wrote, on his "later tragic journey," that: "The Jewish people … is not a sect, not an order, but a whole people, dispersed over the world but united in itself; it has raised up the banner of peaceful labour and has gathered around this banner, as around the symbol of godly order"?[98]

However it is not true that European or émigré Jews did not at all hark to such explanations or warnings. A similar discussion had taken place a little earlier, in 1922. In the re-established Zionist publication Rassvet the nationalist G. I. Shekhtman expressed his incomprehension at how the intelligentsia of other nationalities could be anything other than nationalistic. An intelligentsia is invariably connected to its own nationality and feels its pains. A Jew cannot be a "Russian democrat", but naturally a "Jewish democrat." "I do not recognise dual national or democratic loyalties." And if the Russian intelligentsia "does not identify with its nationality" (Herzen), it is simply because until now it "has not had the opportunity or need to feel sharp pains over its national identity, to worry about it. But that has changed now." Now the Russian intelligentsia "has to cast aside its aspirations to be a universal All-Russian intelligentsia, and instead to regard itself as the Great Russian democracy."[99]

It was difficult to counter. The gauntlet was picked up by P. N. Milyukov, though not very confidently. We remember (see Chapter 11) that back in 1909 he had also expressed horror at the unveiling of this stinging, unpleasant national question "who benefits?" But now this

new awkward situation (and not a change in Milyukov's views), when so many Russian intellectuals in emigration suddenly realized that they lost their Russia, forced Milyukov to amend his previous position. He replied to Shekhtman, though in a rather ambiguous manner and not in his own (highly popular) Poslednie Novosti, but in the Jewish Tribune with much smaller circulation, to the effect that a Russian Jew could and had to be a "Russian democrat." Milyukov treaded carefully: "but when this demand … is fulfilled, and there appears a 'new national face' of Russian Democracy (the Great Russian)," well, wouldn't Shekhtman be first to get scared at the prospect of "empowerment of ethnically conscious Great Russian Democracy with imperial ambitions." Do we then need these phantoms? Is this what we wish to ruin our relations over?[100]

The émigrés lived in an atmosphere of not just verbal tension. There was a sensational murder trial in Paris in 1927 of a clock-maker Samuel Shvartsbard, who lost his whole family in the pogroms in Ukraine, and who killed Petliura with five bullets.[101] (Izvestiya sympathetically reported on the case and printed Shvartsbard's portrait.[102]) The defence raised the stakes claiming that the murder was a justified revenge for Petliura's pogroms: "The defendant wished and felt a duty to raise the issue of anti-Semitism before the world's conscience."[103] The defence called many witnesses to testify that during the Civil War Petliura had been personally responsible for pogroms in Ukraine. The prosecution suggested that the murder had been ordered by Cheka. "Shvartsbard, agitated, called out from his place: '[the witness] doesn't want to admit that I acted as a Jew, and so claims I'm a Bolshevik.'"[104] Shvartsbard was acquitted by the French court. Denikin [a leading White general during the Civil War] was mentioned at that trial, and Shvartsbard's lawyer proclaimed: "If you wish to bring Denikin to trial, I am with you"; "I would have defended the one who would have taken revenge upon Denikin with the same passionate commitment as I am here defending the man who had taken revenge upon Petliura."[105] And as Denikin lived in Paris without guards, anyone wishing to take revenge upon him had an open road. However Denikin was never put on trial. (A similar murder happened later in Moscow in 1929, when Lazar Kolenberg shot the former White general Slashchev, [who after the Civil War returned to Russia and served in Soviet military], for doing nothing to stop pogroms in Nikolayev. "During the investigation, the accused was found to be mentally incompetent to stand trial and released."[106]) During Shvartsbard's trial the prosecutor drew a parallel to another notorious case (that of Boris Koverda): for Petliura had previously lived in Poland, but "you [speaking to Shvartsbard] did not attempt to kill him there, as you knew that in Poland you would be tried by military tribunal."[107] In 1929, a young man, Boris Koverda, also "wishing to present a problem before the world's conscience," had killed the Bolshevik sadist Voikov; he was sentenced to ten years in jail and served his full term.

A White émigré from Revolutionary Terrorist Boris Savinkov's group, Captain V. F. Klementiev, told me that in Warsaw at that time former Russian officers were abused as "White-Guard rascals" and that they were not served in Jewish-owned shops. Such was the hostility, and not just in Warsaw.

Russian émigrés all over Europe were flattened by scarcity, poverty, hardship, and they quickly tired of the showdown over "who is more to blame?" Anti-Jewish sentiments among them abated in the second half of the 1920s. During these years Vasily Shulgin wrote: "Are not our 'visa ordeals' remarkably similar to the oppression experienced by Jews in the Pale of Settlement? Aren't our Nansen passports [internationally recognized identity cards first issued by the League of Nations to stateless refugees], which are a sort of wolf ticket obstructing movement, reminiscent of the 'Jewish religion' label, which we stamped in Jewish passports in Russia, thereby closing many doors to them? Do we not resort to all kinds of middleman jobs when we are unable to attain, because of our peculiar position, a civil servant post or a certain profession? … Are we not gradually learning to 'work around' laws that are inconvenient for us, precisely as Jews did with our laws, and for which we criticized them?"[108]

Yet during these same years anti-Jewish sentiments were on the rise in the USSR and were even reported in the Soviet press, causing distress among Jewish émigrés. So in May 1928 a public "debate on anti-Semitism" was organized in Paris among them. A report of it was placed in the Milyukov's newspaper.[109] (Bikerman's and Pasmanik's group, already non-active, did not participate.)

The formal reason for the debate was "a strong rise of Judeophobia in Russia, a phenomenon that periodically occurs there." The Socialist Revolutionary N. D. Avksentiev chaired the debate, and there were "more Russians than Jews" among the public. Mark Slonim explained that "the long oppressed Russian Jewry, having finally attained freedom, has dashed to secure formerly prohibited positions," and this annoys Russians. "In essence, the past fatefully determined the present." "Bad things" of the past (Tsarist times) "resulted in bad consequences." S. Ivanovich stated that Jews were now tormented in the USSR, because it has become impossible to torment "the bourgeois" thanks to the NEP. But what is worrying is that the Russian intelligentsia in the USSR, although neutral on the Jewish question, now takes the liberty to think: good, "it will begin with anti-Semitism, and lead to the Russian freedom. What a dangerous and foolish illusion."

Such apologetic ideas outraged the next orator, V. Grosman: "It is as if Jewry stands accused!" The question needs to be considered more deeply: "There is no reason to distinguish Soviet anti-Semitism from the anti-Semitism of old Russia," that is to say there is still the same Black Hundredism so dear to Russian hearts. "This is not a Jewish question, but a Russian one, a question of Russian culture."

(But if it is so quintessentially Russian, entirely Russian, inherently Russian problem, then what can be done? What need then for a mutual dialogue?)

The author of the debate report, S. Litovtsev, regretted post factum that it was necessary to find for the debate "several honest people, brave enough to acknowledge their anti-Semitism and frankly explain why they are anti-Semites … Who would say simply, without

evasiveness: 'I don't like this and that about Jews…' Alongside there should have been several equally candid Jews who would say: 'and we don't like this and that about you…' Rest assured, such an honest and open exchange of opinions, with goodwill and a desire for mutual comprehension, would be really beneficial for both Jews and Russians – and for Russia…."[110]

Shulgin replied to this: "Now, among Russian émigrés, surely one needs more bravery to declare oneself a philo-Semite." He extended his answer into a whole book, inserting Litovtsev's question into the title, What we don't like about them.[111]

Shulgin's book was regarded as anti-Semitic, and the proposed "interexchange of views" never took place. Anyway, the impending Catastrophe, coming from Germany, soon took the issue of any debate off the table.

A Union of Russian-Jewish Intelligentsia was created in Paris as if in the attempt to preserve a link between the two cultures. Yet it soon transpired that "life in exile had created a chasm between fathers and sons, and the latter no longer understand what a "Russian-Jewish intelligentsia" is.[112] So the fathers sadly acknowledged that "the Russian Jews, who used to lead global Jewry in spiritual art and in the nation building, now virtually quit the stage."[113] Before the war, the Union had managed to publish only the first issue of collection Jewish world. During the war, those who could, fled across the ocean and untiringly created the Union of Russian Jews in New York City, and published the second issue of the Jewish World. In the 1960s, they published the Book of Russian Jewry in two volumes, about pre- and post-revolutionary Jewish life in Russia. The bygone life in the bygone Russia still attracted their minds.

In this work I cite all these books with gratitude and respect.

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Chapter 18: In the 1920s

The twenties in the Soviet Union was an epoch with a unique atmosphere - a grand social experiment which intoxicated world liberal opinion for decades. And in some places this intoxication still persists. However, almost no one remains of those who drank deeply of its poisonous spirit.

The uniqueness of that spirit was manifested in the ferocity of class antagonism, in the promise of a never-before-seen new society, in the novelty of new forms of human relationships, in the breakdown of the nation's economy, daily life and family structure. The social and demographic changes were, in fact, colossal.

The "great exodus" of the Jewish population to the capitals began, for many reasons, during the first years of communist power. Some Jewish writers are categorical in their description: "Thousands of Jews left their settlements and a handful of southern towns for Moscow, Leningrad and Kiev to find "real life" (1)."

Beginning in 1917, "Jews flooded into Leningrad and Moscow" (2). According to the Jewish Encyclopedia, "hundreds of thousands of Jews moved to Moscow, Leningrad and other major centers" (3), "in 1920, 28,000 Jews lived in Moscow - by 1923, about 86,000; according to 1926 USSR census, 131,000 and in 1933, 226,500." (4) "Moscow became fashionable," they used to say half-seriously in Odessa.

Lurie-Larin, a fanatical and zealous Bolshevik leader during "War Communism" writes that in the first years not less than a million Jews left their settlements; in 1923 about half of Ukraine's Jews lived in large cities, pouring as well into parts of Russia formerly off-limits to Jews (so called "prohibited provinces") from Ukraine and Byelorussia, into Transcaucasia and Central Asia. The magnitude of this flow was half a million, and four-fifth of them settled in RSFSR. One in five of the Jewish migrants went to Moscow (5).

M. Agursky considers Larin's numbers to be substantially undercounted and points out that this demographic change affected interests important to the Russian population (6).

During "War Communism" with its ban on private trade and limitations on craftsmen and on those of certain "social origins" there arose a new social category - the "deprived" (deprived of civil rights). "Many Jews were deprived of civil rights and numbered among the "deprived" ." Still, the "migration of the Jewish population from Byelorussia into the interior of the USSR, mainly to Moscow and Leningrad" did not slow (7). The new arrivals joined relatives or co-ethnics who offered communal support.

According to the 1926 USSR census, 2,211,000 or 83% of the Jewish population lived in cities and towns. 467,000 lived in rural districts. Another 300,000 did not identify themselves as Jews and these were practically all city dwellers. About five out of six Jews in the USSR were

urban dwellers, constituting up to 23% and 40% of the urban population in Ukraine and Byelorussia respectively (8).

Most striking in the provincial capitals and major cities was the flow of Jews into the apparatus of the Soviet government. Ordzhonikidze in 1927 at the 15th Communist Party Congress reported on the "national make up of our party". By his statistics Jews constituted 11.8% of the Soviet government of Moscow; 22.6% in Ukraine (30.3% in Kharkov, the capital); 30.6% in Byelorussia (38.3% in Minsk). If true, then the percentage of Jews in urban areas about equaled that of Jews in the government.

Solomon Schwartz, using data from the work of Lev Singer maintained that the percentage of Jews in the Soviet government was about the same as their percentage of the urban population (and it was significantly lower in the Bolshevik party itself (10)). Using Ordzhonikidze's data, Jews at 1.82% of the population by 1926 were represented in the Apparatus at about 6.5 times their proportion in the population at large.

Its easy to underestimate the impact of the sudden freedom from pre-revolutionary limits on civil rights: "Earlier, power was not accessible to Jews at all and now they had more access to power than anyone else" according to I. Bikerman (11). This sudden change provoked a varied reaction in all strata of society. S. Schwartz writes "from the mid-twenties there arose a new wave of anti-Semitism" which was "not related to the old anti-Semitism, nor a legacy of the past"". "It is an extreme exaggeration to explain it as originating with backwards workers from rural areas as anti-Semitism generally was not a fact of life in the Russian countryside." No, "It was a much more dangerous phenomenon." It arose in the middle strata of urban society and reached the highest levels of the working class which, before the revolution, had remained practically untouched by the phenomenon. "It reached students and members of the communist party and the Komsomol and, even earlier, local government in smaller provincial towns" where "an aggressive and active anti-Semitism took hold" (12).

The Jewish Encyclopedia writes that from the beginning of the 20th century "though official Soviet propaganda writes that anti-Semitism in the latter part of the 20?s was a "legacy of the past", "the facts show that, it arose mainly as a result of colliding social forces in large cities." It was fanned by the "widely held opinion that power in the country had been seized by Jews who formed the nucleus of the Bolsheviks." Bikerman wrote with evident concern in 1923 that "the Jew is in all corners and on all levels of power." "The Russian sees him as a ruler of Moscow, at the head of the capital on Neva, and at the head of the Red Army, a perfected death machine. He sees that St. Vladimir Prospect has been renamed Nakhimson Prospect… The Russian sees the Jew as judge and hangman; he sees Jews at every turn, not only among the communists, but among people like himself, everywhere doing the bidding of Soviet power" not surprising, the Russian, comparing present with past, is confirmed in his idea that power is Jewish power, that it exists for Jews and does the bidding of Jews" (14).

No less visible than Jewish participation in government was the suddenly created new order in culture and education.

The new societal inequality was not so much along the lines of nationality as it was a matter of town versus country. The Russian reader needs no explanation of the advantages bestowed by Soviet power from the 20's to the 80's on capital cities when compared to the rest of the country. One of the main advantages was the level of education and range of opportunities for higher learning. Those established during the early years of Soviet power in capital cities assured for their children and grandchildren future decades of advantages, vis a vis those in the country. The enhanced opportunities in post-secondary education and graduate education meant increased access to the educated elite. Meanwhile, from 1918 the ethnic Russian intelligentsia was being pushed to the margins.

In the 20's students already enrolled in institutions of higher learning were expelled based on social origins policy. Children of the nobility, the clergy, government bureaucrats, military officers, merchants, even children of petty shop keepers were expelled. Applicants from these classes and children of the intelligentsia were denied entry to institutions of higher learning in the years that followed. As a "nationality repressed by the Tsar's regime," Jews did not receive this treatment. Despite "bourgeois origin," the Jewish youth was freely accepted in institutions of higher learning. Jews were forgiven for not being proletarian.

According to the Jewish Encyclopedia, "with the absence of limitations based upon nationality for entry to institutions of higher learning, Jews came to make up 15.4% of all university students in the USSR, almost twice their proportion of the urban population at large" (15). Further, Jews "owing to a high level of motivation" quickly bypassed the unprepared "proletarian" factory workers who had been pushed forward in the education system, and proceeded unhindered into graduate school. In the 20's and 30's and for a long time after, Jews were a disproportionately large part of the intelligentsia.

According to G. Aronson, wide access to higher and specialized education led to the formation of cadres of doctors, teachers and particularly engineers and technical workers among Jews, which naturally led to university faculty posts in the expanding system of higher education (16) and in the widely proliferating research institutions. In the beginning of 1920's, the post of "the State Chair of Science" was occupied not by a scientist but a Bolshevik official, Mandelshtam-Lyadov (17).

Even sharper changes gripped the economic life of the country. Bukharin publicly announced at a Communist Party conference in 1927 that "during War Communism, we purged the Russian petty and middle bourgeoisie along with leading capitalists." When the economy was later opened up to free trade "petty and middle Jewish bourgeoisie took the place of the Russian bourgeoisie… and roughly the same happened with our Russian intelligentsia which bucked and sabotaged our efforts… Its place has been taken in some areas by the Jewish intelligentsia". Moreover, Jewish bourgeousie and intelligentsia are concentrated in

our central regions and cities, where they moved in from western provinces and southern towns." Here "even in the Party ranks one often encounters anti-Semitic tendencies." "Comrades, we must wage a fierce battle against anti-Semitism" (18).

Bukharin described a situation that was obvious to all. Unlike Russian bourgeosie, the Jewish bourgeoisie was not destroyed. The Jewish merchant, much less likely to be damned as a "man of the past," found defenders. Relatives or sympathizers in the Soviet Apparatus… warned about pending arrests or seizures. And if he lost anything - it was just capital, not life. Cooperation was quasi-official through the Jewish Commissariat at the Sovnarkom. The Jews until now had been "a repressed people" and that meant, naturally, they needed help. Larin explained the destruction of the "Russian bourgeoisie" as a "correction of the injustice that existed under the Tsars before the Revolution" (19).

When NEP (New Economic Policy) was crushed, the blow fell with less force against Jewish NEPmen owing to connections in Soviet ruling circles.

Bukharin had been speaking in answer to a remarkable speech by Prof. Y.V. Klyutchnikov, a publicist and a former Kadet [Translator's note: Constitutional Democrat]. In December 1926, the professor spoke at a "meeting on the Jewish question" at the Moscow Conservatory. "We have isolated expressions of hooliganism… Its source is the hurt national feelings of Russians. The February Revolution established the equality of all citizens of Russia, including Jews. The October Revolution went further with the Russian nation proclaiming self-renunciation. A certain imbalance has developed with respect to the proportion of the Jewish population in the country as a whole and the positions they have temporarily occupied in the cities. We are in our own cities and they arrive and squeeze us out. When Russians see Russian women, elders and children freezing on the street 9 to 11 hours a day, getting soaked by the rain in their tents at the market and when they see relatively warm covered Jewish kiosks with bread and sausage they are not happy. These phenomena are catastrophic… and must be considered… There is a terrible disproportion in the government structure, in daily life and in other areas… We have a housing crisis in Moscow - masses of people are crowding into areas not fit for habitation and at the same time people see others pouring in from other parts of the country taking up housing. These arrivals are Jews. A national dissatisfaction is rising and a defensiveness and fear of other nationalities. We must not close our eyes to that. A Russian speaking to a Russian will say things that he will not say to a Jew. Many are saying that there are too many Jews in Moscow. This must be dealt with, but don't call it anti-Semitism" (20).

But Larin regarded Klyutchnikov's speech as a manifestation of anti-Semitism, saying "this speech serves as an example of the good nature of Soviet power in its battle against anti-Semitism because Klyutchnikov was roundly criticized by speakers who followed at the same meeting, but no "administrative measures" were taken against him" (21). (Here it is, the frustration of the communist activist!) Agursky writes: "one would expect repression to swiftly follow for such a speech in the 20's and 30's," but Klyutchnikov got off. Maybe he

received secret support from some quarters (22)? (But why look for secret causes? It would have been too much of a scandal to punish such a famous publicist, who just returned from abroad and could have harmed a reverse migration that was so important for Soviet authorities [Translator's note: "reverse migration" - return of people who emigrated from Russia during previous period of revolutions and Civil War].)

The 20's were spoken of as the "conquest" by the Jews of Russian capital cities and industrial centers where conditions were better. As well, there was a migration to the better areas within the cities. G. Fedotov describes Moscow at that time: "The revolution deformed its soul, turning it inside out, emptying out its mansions, and filling them with a foreign and alien people" (23). A Jewish joke from the era: "Even from Berdichev and even the very old come to Moscow: they want to die in a Jewish city" (24).

In a private letter V.I. Vernadsky [Translator's note: a prominent Russian polymath] in 1927 writes: "Moscow now is like Berdichev; the power of Jewry is enormous - and anti-Semitism (including in communist circles) is growing unabated" (25).

Larin: "We do not hide figures that demonstrate growth of the Jewish population in urban centers," it is completely unavoidable and will continue into the future." He forecasted the migration from Ukraine and Byelorussia of an additional 600,000 Jews. "We can't look upon this as something shameful, that the party would silence… we must create a spirit in the working class so that anyone who gives a speech against the arrival of Jews in Moscow would be considered a counter-revolutionary" (26).

And for counter-revolutionaries there is nine grams of lead (27) - that much is clear.

But, what to do about "anti-Semitic tendencies" even in "our party circles" was a concern in the upper levels of the party.

According to official data reported in Pravda in 1922, Jews made up 5.2% of the party (28). M. Agursky: "But their actual influence was considerably more. In that same year at the 11th Communist Party Congress Jews made up 14.6% of the voting delegates, 18.3% of the non-voting delegates and 26% of those elected to the Central Committee at the conference" (29). (Sometimes one accidentally comes upon such data: a taciturn memoirist from Moscow opens Pravda in July, 1930 and notes: "The portrait of the 25-member Presidium of the Communist Party included 11 Russians, 8 Jews, 3 from the Caucasus, and 3 Latvians" (30).) In the large cities, close to areas of the former Pale of Settlement, the following data: In the early 20's party organizations in Minsk, Gomel and Vitebsk in 1922 were, respectively, 35.8%, 21.1%, and 16.6% Jewish, respectively (31). Larin notes: "Jewish revolutionaries play a bigger part than any others in revolutionary activity" thanks to their qualities, Jewish workers often find it easier to rise to positions of local leadership" (32).

In the same issue of Pravda, it is noted that Jews at 5.2% of the Party were in the third place after Russians (72%) and Ukrainians (5.9%), followed by Latvians (2.5%) and then Georgians,

Tatars, Poles and Byelorussians. Jews had the highest rate of per capita party membership - 7.2% of Jews were in the party versus 3.8% for Great Russians (33).

M. Agursky correctly notes that in absolute numbers the majority of communists were, of course, Russians, but "the unusual role of Jews in leadership was dawning on the Russians" (34). It was just too obvious.

For instance, Zinoviev "gathered many Jews around himself in the Petersburg leadership." (Agursky suggests this was what Larin was referring to in his discussion of the photograph of the Presidium of Petrograd Soviet in 1918 in his book (35)). By 1921 the preponderance of Jews in Petrograd CP organization… "was apparently so odious that the Politburo, reflecting on the lessons of Kronshtadt and the anti-Semitic mood of Petrograd, decided to send several ethnic Russian communists to Petrograd, though entirely for publicity purposes." So Uglanov took the place of Zorin-Homberg as head of Gubkom; Komarov replaced Trilisser and Semyonov went to the Cheka. But Zinoviev "objected to the decision of Politboro and fought the new group" - and as a result Uglanov was recalled from Petrograd and "a purely Russian opposition group formed spontaneously in the Petrograd organization," a group, "forced to counter the rest of the organization whose tone was set by Jews" (36).

But not only in Petrograd - at the 12th Communist Party Congress (1923) three out of six Politburo members were Jewish. Three out of seven were Jews in the leadership of the Komsomol and in the Presidium of the all-Russia Conference in 1922 (37). This was not tolerable to other leading communists and, apparently, preparations were begun for an anti-Jewish revolt at the 13th Party Congress (May 1924)."There is evidence that a group of members of CK was planning to drive leading Jews from the Politburo, replacing them with Nogin, Troyanovsky and others and that only the death of Nogin interrupted the plot." His death, "literally on the eve of the Congress", resulted from an "unsuccessful and unnecessary operation for a stomach ulcer by the same surgeon who dispatched Frunze with an equally unneeded operation a year and a half later" (38).

The Cheka-GPU had second place in terms of real power after the Party. A researcher of archival material, whom we quoted in Chapter 16, reports interesting statistics on the composition of the Cheka in 1920, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1925 and 1927 (39). He concludes that the proportion of national minorities in the apparatus gradually fell towards the mid-20's. "In the OGPU as a whole, the proportion of personnel from a national minority fell to 30-35% and to 40-45% for those in leadership." (These figures contrast with 50% and 70% respectively during the "Red Terror.") However, "we observe a decline in the percentage of Latvians and an increase in the percentage of Jews". The 20's was a period of significant influx of Jewish cadres into the organs of the OGPU". The author explains this: "Jews strived to utilize capabilities not needed in the pre-revolutionary period. With the increasing professionalism and need for organization, Jews, better than others, were able to meet the needs of OGPU and the new conditions." For example, three of Dzerzhinsky's four assistants were Jews - G. Yagoda, V.L. Gerson, and M.M. Lutsky (40).

In the 20's and 30's, the leading Chekists circled over the land like birds of prey flying quickly from cliff to cliff. From the top ranks of the Central Asian GPU off to Byelorussia and from Western Siberia to the North Caucasus, from Kharkov to Orenburg and from Orel to Vinnitza - there was a perpetual whirlwind of movement and change. And the lonely voices of those surviving witnesses could only speak much later, without precise reference to time, of the executioners whose names flashed by them. The personnel, the deeds and the power of the Cheka were completely secret.

For the 10th anniversary of the glorious Cheka we read in a newspaper a formal order signed by the omnipresent Unshlicht (from 1921 – deputy head of Cheka, from 1923 - member of Revvoensovet, from 1925 - Deputy Narkom of the Navy (41)). In it, Yagoda was rewarded for "particularly valuable service… for sacrifice in the battle with counter revolution"; also given awards were M. Trilisser (distinguished for his "devotion to the revolution and untiring persecution of its enemies") as well as 32 Chekists who had not been before the public until then. Each of them with the flick of a finger could destroy anyone of us! Among them were Jakov Agranov (for the work on all important political trials - and in the future he will orchestrate the trials of Zinoviev, Kamenev, the "Industrial Party Trial," and others (42)), Zinovy Katznelson, Matvey Berman (transferred from Central Asia to the Far East) and Lev Belsky (transferred from the Far East to Central Asia).

There were several new names: Lev Zalin, Lev Meyer, Leonid Bull (dubbed "warden of Solovki"), Simeon Gendin, Karl Pauker. Some were already known to only a few, but now the people would get to know them. In this jubilee newspaper (43) issue we can find a large image of slick Menzhinsky with his faithful deputy Yagoda and a photograph of Trilisser. Shortly afterward, another twenty Chekists were awarded with the order of the Red Banner, and again we see a motley company of Russians, Latvians, and Jews, the latter in the same proportions - around one-third.

Some of them were avoiding publicity. Simeon Schwartz was director of the Ukrainian Cheka. A colleague of his, Yevsei Shirvindt directed the transport of prisoners and convoys throughout the USSR. Naturally, such Chekists as Grimmeril Heifetz (a spy from the end of the Civil War to the end of WWII) and Sergei Spigelglas (a Chekist from 1917 who, through his work as a spy, rose to become director of the Foreign Department of the NKVD and a two-time recipient of the honorary title of "distinguished chekist") worked out of the public eye. Careers of others, like Albert Stromin-Stroyev, were less impressive (he "conducted interrogations of scientists during the "Academy trial" in 1929-31" (44)).

David Azbel remembers the Nakhamkins, a family of Hasidic Jews from Gomel. (Azbel himself was imprisoned because of snitching by the younger family member, Lev.) "The revolution threw the Nakhamkins onto the crest of a wave. They thirsted for the revenge on everyone - aristocrats, the wealthy, Russians, few were left out. This was their path to self-realization. It was no accident that fate led the offspring of this glorious clan to the Cheka, GPU, NKVD and the prosecutor's office. To fulfill their plans, the Bolsheviks needed "rabid"

people and this is what they got with the Nakhamkins. One member of this family, Roginsky, achieved "brilliant heights" as Deputy Prosecutor for the USSR "but during the Stalinist purges was imprisoned, as were many, and became a cheap stool pigeon… the others were not so well known. They changed their last name to one more familiar to the Russian ear and occupied high places in the Organs" (45).

Unshlict did not change his name to one "more familiar to the Russian ear." See, this Slavic brother became truly a "father of Russians": a warplane built with funds of farmer mutual aid societies (that is, - on the last dabs of money extorted from peasants) was named after him. No doubt, farmers could not even pronounce his name and likely thought that this Pole was a Jew. Indeed, this reminds us that the Jewish issue does not explain the devastation of revolution, albeit it places a heavy hue on it. As it was also hued by many other unpronounceable names - from Polish Dzerzhinsky and Eismont to Latvian Vatsetis. And what if we looked into the Latvian issue? Apart from those soldiers who forced the dissolution of the Russian Constituent Assembly and who later provided security for the Bolshevik leaders during the entire Civil War, we find many high-placed Latvian Bolsheviks. Gekker suppressed the uprising in Yaroslavl Guberniya. Among others, there were Rudzutak, Eikhe, Eikhmans from Solovki, M. Karklin, A. Kaktyn, R. Kisis, V. Knorin, A. Skundre (one of those who suppressed the Tambov Uprising); Chekists Petere, Latsis, and an "honorary Chekist" Lithuanian I. Yusis. This thread can lead directly to 1991 (Pugo…) And what if we separate Ukrainians from Russians (as demanded by the Ukrainians these days)? We will find dozens of them at the highest posts of Bolshevik hierarchy, from its conception to the very end.

No, power was not Jewish power then. Political power was internationalist - and its ranks were to the large extent Russian. But under its multi-hued internationalism it united in an anti-Russian front against a Russian state and Russian traditions.

In view of the anti-Russian orientation of power and the multinational makeup of the executioners, why, in Ukraine, Central Asia and the Baltics did the people think it was Russians who had enslaved them? Because they were alien. A destroyer from one's own nation is much closer than a destroyer from an alien tribe. And while it is a mistake to attribute the ruin and destruction to nationalist chauvinism, at the same time in Russia in the 20's the inevitable question hanged in the air that was posed many year later by Leonard Schapiro: why was it "highly likely that anyone unfortunate enough to fall into the hands of the Cheka would go before a Jewish interrogator or be shot by a Jew." (46)?

Yet the majority of modern writers fail to even acknowledge these questions. Often Jewish authors thoughtlessly and meticulously comply and publish vast lists of Jewish leadership of the time. For example, see how proudly the article "Jews in Kremlin" (47), published in journal Alef, provides a list of the highest Soviet officials - Jews for 1925. It listed eight out of twelve directors of Gosbank. The same level of Jewish representation was found among top trade union leaders. And it comments: "We do not fear accusations. Quite opposite - it is

active Jewish participation in governing the state that helps to understand why state affairs were better then than now, when Jews at top positions are as rare as hen's teeth. Unbelievably, that was written in 1989.

Regarding the army, one Israeli scholar (48) painstakingly researched and proudly published a long list of Jewish commanders of the Red Army, during and after the Civil War. Another Israeli researcher published statistics obtained from the 1926 census to the effect that while Jews made up 1.7% of the male population in the USSR, they comprised 2.1% of the combat officers, 4.4% of the command staff, 10.3% of the political leadership and 18.6% of military doctors (49).

And what did the West see? If the government apparatus could operate in secret under the communist party, which maintained its conspiratorial secrecy even after coming to power, diplomats were on view everywhere in the world. At the first diplomatic conferences with Soviets in Geneva and the Hague in 1922, Europe could not help but notice that Soviet delegations and their staff were mostly Jewish (50). Due to the injustice of history, a long and successful career of Boris Yefimovich Stern is now completely forgotten (he wasn't even mentioned in the Great Soviet Encyclopedia (GSE) of 1971). Yet he was the second most important assistant to Chicherin during Genoa Conference, and later at Hague Conference, and still later he led Soviet delegation during longstanding demilitarization negotiations. He was also a member of Soviet delegation at League of Nations. Stern was ambassador in Italy and Finland and conducted delicate negotiations with the Finns before the Soviet-Finnish war. Finally, from 1946 to 1948 he was the head of the Soviet delegation at UN. And he used to be a longstanding lecturer at the High Diplomatic School (at one point during "anti-cosmopolitan" purges he was fired but in 1953 he was restored at that position).

An associate of Chicherin, Leon Haikis worked for many years in the Narkomat of the Foreign Affairs (NKID). In 1937 he was sent to a warmer place as ambassador to the embattled Republican government of Spain (where he directed the Republican side during the Civil War), but was arrested and removed. Fyodor Rotshtein founded the communist party in Great Britain in 1920 and in that very year he was a member of the Soviet delegation in negotiations with England! Two years later he represented RSFSR at the Hague conference (51). (As Litvinov's right hand man he independently negotiated with ambassadors to Russia in important matters; until 1930 he was in the Presidium of NKID and for 30 years before his death, a professor at the Moscow State University.)

And on the other side of the globe, in southern China, M. Gruzenberg-Borodin had served for 5 years when the December 1927 Canton Rebellion against the Kuomintang broke out. It is now recognized that the revolt was prepared by our Vice Consul, Abram Hassis, who, at age of 33 was killed by Chinese soldiers. Izvestia ran several articles with the obituaries and the photographs of "comrades in arms" under Kuibishev, comparing the fallen comrade with highly distinguished communists like Furmanov and Frunze (52).

In 1922 Gorky told the academic Ipatiev that 98% of the Soviet trade mission in Berlin was Jewish (53) and this probably was not much of an exaggeration. A similar picture would be found in other Western capitals where the Soviets were ensconced. The "work" that was performed in early Soviet trade missions is colorfully described in a book by G.A. Solomon (54), the first Soviet trade representative in Tallinn, Estonia - the first European capital to recognize the Bolsheviks. There are simply no words to describe the boundless theft by the early Bolsheviks in Russia (along with covert actions against the West) and the corruption of soul these activities brought to their effecters.

Shortly after Gorky's conversation with Ipatiev he "was criticized in the Soviet press for an article where he reproached the Soviet government for its placement of so many Jews in positions of responsibility in government and industry. He had nothing against Jews per se, but, departing from views he expressed in 1918, he thought that Russians should be in charge" (55). And Pravda's twin publication Dar Amos (Pravda in Yiddish) objected strongly: Do they (i.e. Gorky and Shalom Ash, the interviewer) really want for Jews to refuse to serve in any government position? For them to get out of the way? That kind of decision could only be made by counter-revolutionaries or cowards" (56).

In Jews in the Kremlin, the author, using the 1925 Annual Report of NKID, introduces leading figures and positions in the central apparatus. "In the publishing arm there is not one non-Jew" and further, with evident pride, the author "examines the staff in the Soviet consulates around the world and finds there is not one country in the world where the Kremlin has not placed a trusted Jew" (57).

If he was interested, the author of Alef could find no small number of Jews in the Supreme Court of RSFSR of 1920's, in the Procurator's office and RKI. Here we can find already familiar A. Goikhbarg, who, after chairing the Lesser Sovnarcom, worked out the legal system for the NEP era, supervised development of Civil Code of RSFSR and was director of the Institute of Soviet Law (59).

It is much harder to examine lower, provincial level authorities, and not only because of their lower exposure to the press but also due to their rapid fluidity, and frequent turnover of cadres from post to post, from region to region. This amazing early Soviet shuffling of personnel might have been caused either by an acute deficit of reliable men as in in the Lenin's era or by mistrust (and the "tearing" of a functionary from the developed connections) in Stalin's times.

Here are several such career "trajectories".

Lev Maryasin was Secretary of Gubkom of Orel Guberniya, later – chair of Sovnarkhoz of Tatar Republic, later – head of a department of CK of Ukraine, later – chair of board of directors of Gosbank of USSR, and later – Deputy Narkom of Finances of USSR. Moris Belotsky was head of Politotdel of the First Cavalry Army (a very powerful position),

participated in suppression of the Kronshtadt Uprising, later – in NKID, then later – the First Secretary of North Ossetian Obkom, and even later was First Secretary of CK of Kyrgyzstan.

A versatile functionary Grigory Kaminsky was Secretary of Gubkom of Tula Guberniya, later – Secretary of CK of Azerbaijan, later – chair of Kolkhozcenter, and later – Narkom of Health Care Service.

Abram Kamensky was Narkom of State Control Commission of Donetsk-Krivoy Rog Republic, later – Deputy Narkom of Nationalities of RSFSR, later – Secretary of Gubkom of Donetsk, later served in Narkomat of Agriculture, then – director of Industrial Academy, and still later he served in the Narkomat of Finances (60).

There were many Jewish leaders of the Komsomol.

Ascendant career of Efim Tzetlin began with the post of the First Chairman of CK RKSM (fall of 1918); after the Civil War he become Secretary of CK and Moscow Committee of RKSM, since 1922 – a member of executive committee of KIM (Young Communist International), in 1923-24 – a spy in Germany, later he worked in Secretariat of Executive Committee of Communist International, still later – in editorial office of Pravda, and even later he was head of Bukharin's secretariat, where this latter post eventually proved fatal for him (61).

The career of Isaiah Khurgin was truly amazing. In 1917 he was a member of Ukrainian Rada [Parliament], served both in the Central and the Lesser chambers and worked on the draft of legislation on Jewish autonomy in Ukraine. Since 1920 we see him as a member VKPb, in 1921 – he was the Trade Commissioner of Ukraine in Poland, in 1923 he represented German-American Transport Society in USA, serving as a de facto Soviet plenipotentiary. He founded and chaired Amtorg (American Trading Corporation). His future seemed incredibly bright but alas at the age of 38 (in 1925) he was drowned in a lake in USA (62). What a life he had!

Let's glance at the economy. Moses Rukhimovitch was Deputy Chair of Supreme Soviet of the National Economy. Ruvim Levin was a member of Presidium of Gosplan (Ministry of Economic Planning) of USSR and Chair of Gosplan of RSFSR (later – Deputy Narkom of Finances of USSR). Zakhary Katzenelenbaum was inventor of the governmental "Loan for Industrialization" in 1927 (and, therefore, of all subsequent "loans"). He also was one of the founders of Soviet Gosbank. Moses Frumkin was Deputy Narkom of Foreign Trade from 1922 but in fact he was in charge of the entire Narkomat. He and A. I. Vainstein were long-serving members of the panel of Narkomat of Finances of USSR. Vladimirov-Sheinfinkel was Narkom of Provand of Ukraine, later – Narkom of Agriculture of Ukraine, and even later he served as Narkom of Finances of RSFSR and Deputy Narkom of Finances of USSR (63).

If you are building a mill, you are responsible for possible flood. A newspaper article by Z. Zangvil describes celebratory jubilee meeting of the Gosbank board of directors in 1927 (five years after introduction of chervonets [a former currency of the Russian Empire and Soviet

Union] and explains the importance of chervonets and displays a group photograph. The article lauds Sheinman, the chairman of the board, and Katzenelenbaum, a member of the board (64). Sheinman's signature was reproduced on every Soviet chervonets and he simultaneously held the post of Narkom of Domestic Commerce (from 1924). And hold your breath, my reader! He didn't return from a foreign visit in 1929 (65)! He preferred to live in bloody capitalism!

Speaking of mid-level Soviet institutions, the well-known economist and professor B. D. Brutskus asks: "Did not the revolution open up new opportunities for the Jewish population?" Among these opportunities would be government service. "…more than anything it is obvious the large numbers of Jews in government, particularly in higher posts," and "most of the Jewish government employees come from the higher classes not the Jewish masses." But, upperclass Jews, required to serve the Soviet government did not gain, but lost in comparison with what they would have had in their own businesses or freely pursuing professions. As well, those who moved through the Soviet hierarchy had to display the utmost of tact to avoid arousing jealousy and dissatisfaction. A large number of Jewish public servants, regardless of talent and qualities, would not lessen anti-Semitism, but would strengthen it among other workers and among the intelligentsia." He maintained "there are many Jewish public servants particularly in the commissariats devoted to economic functions" (66).

Larin put it more simply: "the Jewish intelligentsia in large numbers served the victorious revolution readily" realizing "access to previously denied government service" (67).

G. Pomerantz, speaking 50 years later justified this: "history dragged Jews into the government apparatus," … Jews had nowhere else to go besides to government institutions," including the Cheka (68) as we commented earlier. The Bolsheviks also "had no other place to go – the Jewish Tribune from Paris explains "there were so many Jews in various Soviet functions" because of the need for literate, sober bureaucrats" (69).

However one can read in Jewish World, a Parisian publication, that: "there is no denying that a large percentage of Jewish youth from lower social elements — some completely hopeless failures, were drawn to Bolshevism by the sudden prospect of power; for others it was the 'world proletarian revolution' and for still others it was a mixture of adventurous idealism and practical utilitarianism (70).

Of course not all were "drawn to Bolshevism." There were large numbers of peaceful Jews whom the revolution crushed. However, the life in the towns of the former Pale of Settlement was not visible to ordinary non-Jewish person. Instead the average person saw, as described by M. Heifetz, "arrogant, self-confident and self-satisfied adult Jews at ease on 'red holidays' and 'red weddings'… 'We now sit where Tsars and generals once sat, and they sit beneath us'" (71).

These were not unwaveringly ideological Bolsheviks. The invitation to power was extended to "millions of residents from rotting shtetls, to pawn brokers, tavern owners, contrabandists, seltzer water salesmen and those who sharpened their wills in the fight for survival and their minds in evening study of the Torah and the Talmud. The authorities invited them to Moscow, Petrograd and Kiev to take into their quick nervous hands that which was falling from the soft, pampered hands of the hereditary intelligentsia – everything from the finances of a great power, nuclear physics and the secret police.

They couldn't resist the temptation of Esau, the less so since, in addition to a bowl of potage, they were offered the chance to build the promised land, that is, communism" (72). There was "a Jewish illusion that this was their country" (73).

Many Jews did not enter the whirlwind of revolution and didn't automatically join the Bolsheviks, but the general national inclination was one of sympathy for the Bolshevik cause and a feeling that life would now be incomparably better. "The majority of Jews met the revolution, not with fear, but with welcome arms" (74). In the early 20's the Jews of Byelorussia and Ukraine were a "significant source of support for the centralization of power in Moscow over and against the influence of regional power" (75). Evidence of Jewish attitudes in 1923 showed the overwhelming majority considered Bolshevism to be a lesser evil and that if the Bolsheviks lost power it would be worse for them (76).

"Now, a Jew can command an army!… These gifts alone were enough to bring Jewish support for the communists… The disorder of the Bolshevism seemed like a brilliant victory for justice and no one noticed the complete suppression of freedom" (77). Large number of Jews who did not leave after the revolution failed to foresee the bloodthirstiness of the new government, though the persecution, even of socialists, was well underway. The Soviet government was as unjust and cruel then as it was to be in '37 and in 1950. But in the 20's it did not raise alarm or resistance in the wider Jewish population since its force was aimed not at Jewry.

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When Leskov, in a report for the Palensky Commission [Translator's note: a pre-revolution government commission], one by one refuted all the presumed consequences for Russians from the removal of restrictions on Jewish settlement in Russia he couldn't have foreseen the great degree to which Jews would be participating in governing the country and the economy in the 20's.

The revolution changed the entire course of events and we don't know how things would have developed without it.

When in 1920, Solomon Luria [Translator's note: aka Lurie], a professor of ancient history in Petrograd, found that in Soviet, internationalist and communist Russia anti-Semitism was again on the rise, he was not surprised. On the contrary, "events substantiated the

correctness of [his] earlier conclusions" that the "cause of anti-Semitism lies with the Jews themselves" and currently "with or in spite of the complete absence of legal restrictions on Jews, anti-Semitism has erupted with a new strength and reached a pitch that could never have been imagined in the old regime" (78).

Russian (more precisely Little Russian) anti-Semitism of past centuries and the early 20th century was blown away with its seeds by the winds of the October revolution. Those who joined the Union of the Russian People, those who marched with their religious standards to smash Jewish shops, those who demanded the execution of Beilis, those who defended the royal throne, the urban middle class and those who were with them or who resembled them or who were suspected to be like them were rounded up by the thousands and shot or imprisoned.

Among Russian workers and peasants there was no anti-Semitism before the revolution – this is attested to by leaders of the revolution themselves. The Russian intelligentsia was actively sympathetic to the cause of the oppressed Jews and children of the post-revolution years were raised only in the internationalist spirit.

Stripped of any strength, discredited and crushed completely, where did anti-Semitism come from?

We already described how surprising it was for Jewish-Russian émigrés to learn that anti-Semitism had not died. They followed the phenomenon in writings of socialists E.D. Kuskova and S.S. Maslov, who came from Russia in 1922.

In an article in the Jewish Tribune, Kuskova states that anti-Semitism in the USSR is not a figment of the imagination and that "in Russia, Bolshevism is now blending with Judaism — this cannot be doubted." She even met highly cultured Jews who were anti-Semites of the new "Soviet type." A Jewish doctor told her: "Jewish Bolshevik administrators ruined the excellent relations he had with the local population." A teacher said "children tell me that I teach in a Jewish school" because we have "forbidden the teaching of The Ten Commandments and driven off the priest." "There are only Jews in the Narkomat of Education. In high school circles ('from radical families') there is talk about the predominance of the Jews." "Young people, in general are more anti-Semitic than the older generation… and one hears everywhere 'they showed their true colors and tortured us'." "Russian life is full of this stuff today. But if you ask me who they are, these anti-Semites, they are most of the society." "So widespread is this thinking that the political administration distributed a proclamation explaining why there are so many Jews in it: 'When the Russian proletariat needed its own new intelligentsia, mid-level intelligentsia, technical workers and administrative workers, not surprisingly, Jews, who, before had been in the opposition, came forward to meet them… the occupation by Jews of administrative posts in the new Russia is historically inevitable and would have been the natural outcome, regardless of whether the new Russia had become KD (Constitutional Democrat), SR

(Socialist Revolutionary) or proletarian. Any problems with having Aaron Moiseevich Tankelevich sitting in the place of Ivan Petrovich Ivanov need to be 'cured'."

Kuskova parries "in a Constitutional Democratic or SR Russia many administrative posts would have been occupied by Jews…. but neither the Kadets nor SR's would have forbidden teaching the Ten Commandments and wouldn't have chopped off heads… Stop Tankelevich from doing evil and there will be no microbe of anti-Semitism" (79).

The Jewish émigré community was chilled by Maslov's findings. Here was a tested SR with an unassailable reputation who lived through the first four years of Soviet power. "Judeophobia is everywhere in Russia today. It has swept areas where Jews were never before seen and where the Jewish question never occurred to anyone. The same hatred for Jews is found in Vologda, Archangel, in the towns of Siberia and the Urals" (80). He recounts several episodes affecting the perception of the simple Russian peasants such as the Tyumen Produce Commissar Indenbaum's order to shear sheep for the second time in the season, "because the Republic needs wool." (This was prior to collectivization, no less; these actions of this commissar caused the Ishim peasant uprising.) The problem arose because it was late in the fall and the sheep would die without their coats from the coming winter cold. Maslov does not name the commissars who ordered the planting of millet and fried sun-flower seeds or issued a prohibition on planting malt, but one can conclude they did not come from ordinary Russian folk or from the Russian aristocracy or from "yesterday's men." From all this, the peasantry could only conclude that the power over them was "Jewish." So too did the workers. Several workers' resolutions from the Urals in Feb and March of 1921 sent to the Kremlin "complained with outrage of the dominance of the Jews in central and local government." "The intelligentsia, of course does not think that Soviet power is Jewish, but it has noted the vastly disproportionate role of Jews in authority" when compared to their numbers in the population.

"And if a Jew approaches a group of non-Jews who are freely discussing Soviet reality, they almost always change the topic of conversation even if the new arrival is a personal acquaintance" (81).

Maslov tries to understand "the cause of the widespread and bitter hatred of Jews in modern Russia" and it seems to him to be the "identification throughout society of Soviet power and Jewish power."

"The expression 'Yid Power' is often used in Russia and particularly in Ukraine and in the former Pale of Settlement not as a polemic, but as a completely objective definition of power, its content and its politics." "Soviet power in the first place answers the wishes and interests of Jews and they are its ardent supporters and in the second place, power resides in Jewish hands."

Among the causes of Judeophobia Maslov notes the "tightly welded ethnic cohesion they have formed as a result of their difficult thousands year old history". "This is particularly

noticeable when it comes to selecting staff at institutions – if the selection process is in the hands of Jews, you can bet that the entire staff of responsible positions will go to Jews, even if it means removing the existing staff." And often that "preference for their own is displayed in a sharp, discourteous manner which is offensive to others." In the Jewish bureaucrat, Soviet power manifests more obviously its negative features… the intoxicating wine of power is stronger for Jews and goes to their head… I don't know where this comes from," perhaps because of the low cultural level of the former pharmacists and shopkeepers. Maybe from living earlier without full civil rights?" (82).

The Parisian Zionist journal Sunrise wrote in 1922 that Gorky essentially said that "the growth of anti-Semitism is aided by the tactless behavior of the Jewish Bolsheviks themselves in many situations."

That is the blessed truth!

And Gorky wasn't speaking of Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev – he was speaking of the typical Jewish communist who occupies a position in the collegia, presidia and petty and mid-level Soviet institutions where he comes into contact with large swaths of the population. Such individuals occupy leading front-line positions which naturally multiplies their number in the mind of the public (83).

D. Pasmanik comments: "we must admit that many Jews through their own actions provoke acute anti-Semitism… all the impudent Jews filling the communist ranks – these pharmacists, shopkeepers, peddlers, dropouts and pseudo intellectuals are indeed causing much evil to Russia and Jewry" (84).

"Hardly ever before inside of Russia or outside of Russia have Jews been the subject of such an active and concentrated hostility — it has never reached such an intensity nor been so widespread. This elemental hostility has been fed by the open and undeniable participation of Jews in destructive processes underway in Europe as well as by the tales and exaggerations about such participation" (86)."A terrible anti-Semitic mood is taking hold, fed exclusively by Bolshevism which continues to be identified with Jewry" (86).

In 1927 Mikhail Kozakov (shot in 1930 after the "food workers' trial") wrote in a private letter to his brother overseas about the "Judeophobic mood of the masses (among non-party and party members)… it is no secret that the mass of workers do not love the Jews" (87).

And Shulgin, after his "secret" trip to the USSR in 1928 says: No one says anymore that anti-Semitism is propaganda planted by the "Tsar's government" or an infection limited to the "dregs of society"… Geographically it spreads wider each day threatening to engulf all of Russia. The main center today seems to be Moscow… anti-Semitism is a new phenomenon in Great Russia," but is much more serious than old anti-Semitism in the South (anti-Semitism

of the South of Russia was traditionally humorous and mitigated by anecdotes about Jews (88)).

Larin brings up an anti-Jewish slogan allegedly used for propaganda purposes by the White Guards — “Russians are sent to Narym [Translator’s note: a locale in the far north] and Jews to the Crimea” [Translator’s note: a vacation spot] (89).

The Soviet authorities eventually became seriously concerned with the rise of anti-Semitism. In 1923 the Jewish Tribunewrites, albeit with skepticism, “the Commissariat of Internal Affairs has established a commission to study the question of ‘protecting the Jews from dark forces’ ” (90).

In 1926 Kalinin (and other functionaries) received many questions about Jews in letters and at meetings. As a result, Larin undertook a study of the problem in a book Jews and anti-Semitism in the USSR. From his own reports, queries and interviews (taken, we can presume, from communists or communist sympathizers) he enumerates 66 questions from those the authorities received, recording them without editing the language. Among these questions (91):

Where are the Jews in Moscow coming from?

Why is authority predominantly Jewish?

How come Jews don’t wait in line?

How do Jews arriving from Berdichev and other cities immediately receive apartments? (There is a joke that the last Jew left Berdichev and gave the keys to the city to Kalinin.)

Why do Jews have money and own their own bakeries, etc?

Why are Jews drawn to light work and not to physical labor?

Why do Jews in government service and in professions stick together and help each other while Russians do not?

They do not want to work at everyday jobs, but are concerned only with their careers.

Why do they not farm even though it is now allowed them?

Why are Jews given good land in the Crimea while Russians are given inferior land?

Why is party opposition 76% Jewish? [Translator's note: the opposition to the "general line of the party" within the party itself]

Why did anti-Semitism develop only against Jews and not against other nationalities?

What should a group agitprop leader do when he tries to counter anti-Semitic tendencies in his group and no one supports him?

Larin suspects that these questions were dreamed up and spread among the masses by an underground organization of counter-revolutionaries (92)! As we will see later, this is where some official explanations came from. But he fixates on the unexpected phenomenon and tries to address scientifically the question "How could anti-Semitism take hold in the USSR in those strata of society — [factory workers, students], where, before the revolution, it was little noted (93)?" His findings were:

Anti-Semitism among the intelligentsia.

"Among the intelligentsia anti-Semitism is more developed than in any other group." However, he maintains that "dissatisfaction rises not from the large number of Jews, but from the fact that Jews presumed to enter into competition with the Russian intelligentsia for government jobs."

"The obvious development of anti-Semitic attitudes among city clerks and workers by 1928 cannot be explained by excessive numbers of Jews claiming jobs". "Among the intellectual professions, anti-Semitic tendencies are felt in the medical sphere and in engineering… The army has "good political training" and there is no anti-Semitism there, even though the command staff of the Red Army has a significantly higher percentage of Jews than are present in the country as a whole" (94).

Anti-Semitism among the urban bourgeoisie.

"The root of anti-Semitism is found in urban bourgeois philistinism." But, "the battle against anti-Semitism among the bourgeoisie…it is mixed in with the question of the destruction of the bourgeoisie in general… The anti-Semitism of the bourgeoisie will disappear when the bourgeoisie disappears" (95).

Anti-Semitism in the countryside.

"We have almost completely pushed out the private trader of the peasant's grain, therefore among the peasant masses anti-Semitism is not showing itself and has even weakened against its pre-war levels." Now it appears only in those areas where Jews have been resettled on the land, allegedly from Kulaks and former landowners (96).

Anti-Semitism among the working class.

"Anti-Semitism among the workers has grown noticeably stronger in recent years." By 1929 there could be no doubt of its existence. Now it occurs with more frequency and intensity than a few years ago. It is particularly strong among the "backwards parts of the working class" — women and seasonal workers. However, an anti-Semitic mood can be observed among a broad spectrum of workers," not only among the "corrupted fringe." And here economic competition is not a factor — it arises even where there is no such competition; Jews make up only make "only 2.7%" of the working class. In the lower level professional organizations they tried to paint over anti-Semitism. Difficulties arise because attempts to

"hide anti-Semitism" come from the "active proletariat" itself; indeed, anti-Semitism originates from the "active proletariat." "In many cases Party members and members of Komsomol demonstrate anti-Semitism. Talk of Jewish dominance is particularly widespread, and in meetings one hears complaints that the Soviet authority limits itself to battle with the Orthodox religion alone."

What savagery — anti-Semitism among the proletariat?!! How could this occur in the most progressive and politically aware class in the world?! Larin finds that it arose because "no other means remained for the White Guard to influence the masses besides anti-Semitism." Its plan of action moves along "the rails of anti-Semitism" (97). This was a theory that was to have frightening consequences.

Larin's views on the anti-Semitism of the time were to find echoes later in other authors.

S. Shwartz provides his own variant on anti-Semitism as being the result of a "vulgar perception of Jews as the main carriers of the New Economic Policy (NEP)." But he agrees: "The Soviet government, not without basis, saw in anti-Semitism a possible tool of the counter-revolution" (98).

In 1968 the author adds: "After the civil war, anti-Semitism began to spread, gripping layers of society which were free of this tendency before the revolution" (99).

Against this it was necessary to engage not in academic discussion but to act energetically and forcefully. In May, 1928 the CK of the VKPb issued an Agitprop communication about "measures to be taken in the battle with anti-Semitism." (As was often the case in implementation of party directives, related documents were not publicized, but circulated among party organizations.) The battle to create an atmosphere of intolerance of anti-Semitism was to be taken up in educational programs, public reports, lectures, the press, radio and school textbooks and finally, authorities were "to apply the strictest disciplinary measures to those found guilty of anti-Semitic practices" (100). Sharp newspaper articles followed. In Pravda'sarticle by a highly connected Lev Sosnovsky, he incriminates all kinds of party and educational officials in anti-Semitism: an official in Kiev "openly fires Jews" with "the connivance of the local district party committee"; defamatory anti-Jewish graffiti is widespread etc. From a newspaper article: "with the growing battle against anti-Semitism there are demands to solve the problem by increasing repression on those carriers of anti-Semitism and on those who protect them." Clearly it was the GPU speaking through the language of a newspaper article (101).

After Larin's report, the issue of anti-Semitism was included into various educational curricula, while Larin himself continued to research the ways to overcome anti-Semitism decisively. "Until now we were too soft… allowing propaganda to spread… Locally officials often do not deal with anti-Semitism as rigorously as they should." Newspapers "should not fear to point attention to "the Jewish issue" (to avoid dissemination of anti-Semitism) as it only interferes with the fight against counter revolutionary sabotage." "Anti-Semitism is a

social pathology like alcoholism or vagrancy. Too often when dealing with communists we let them off with mere censure. If a person goes to church and gets married, then we exclude him without discussion — anti-Semitism is no less an evil."

"As the USSR develops towards socialism, the prognosis is good that 'Soviet' anti-Semitism and the legacy of pre-Soviet relationships will be torn out by the roots. Nevertheless, it is absolutely necessary to impose severe controls on intellectual anti-Semitism especially in the teaching profession and civil service" (102).

But the very spirit of the brave Twenties demands stronger language. "The nature of modern-day anti-Jewish agitation in the USSR is political and not nationalistic." Agitation against the Jews is directed not just against Jews, but indirectly against the Soviet power." Or maybe not so indirect: "anti-Semitism is a means of mobilization against Soviet power." And "those against the position of Soviet authorities on the Jewish question are against the working class and for the capitalists." Any talk of " 'Jewish dominance' will be regarded as counterrevolutionary activity against the very foundation of the nationalities policy of the proletarian revolution… Parts of the intelligentsia, and sometimes the White Guards are using anti-Semitism to transmit bourgeois ideology."

Yes, that's it – a White Guard whispering campaign, clearly there is "planned… agitation by secret White Guard organizations." Behind "the philistine anti-Jewish agitation, secret monarchist organizations are leading a battle against Soviet power…" And from "the central organs of anti-Soviet emigration (including Jewish bankers and Tsarist generals) an ideology is transmitted right into our factories proving that anti-Jewish agitation in the USSR is class-based, not nationality-based… It is necessary to explain to the masses that encouragement of anti-Jewish feelings in essence is an attempt to lay the groundwork for counter-revolution. The masses must regard anyone who shows sympathy to anti-Semitism as a secret counter-revolutionary or the mouthpiece of a secret monarchist organization." (There are conspiracies everywhere!) "The term 'anti-Semite' must take on the same meaning in the public mind as the term 'counter-revolutionary' " (103).

The authorities had seen through everything and named everything for what it was: counter-revolution, White Guards, monarchists, White generals and "anyone suspected of being any of the above…"

For the thickheaded, the revolutionary orator elaborates: "The methods to fight anti-Semitism are clear." At a minimum, to conduct open investigations and sessions of "people's tribunal against anti-Semitism" at local levels under the motto "explanations for the backward workers" and "repressions for the malicious." "There is no reason why "Lenin's decree" should not apply" (104))

Under "Lenin's decree" (that from July 27, 1918) active anti-Semites were to be placed outside of the law — that is, to be shot even for agitating for a pogrom, not just for

participating in one (105). The law encouraged each Jew to register a complaint about any ethnic insult visited upon him.

Now some later author will object that the "July 27 Act" was ultimately not included in the law and was not part of the criminal code of 1922. Though the criminal code of 1926 did include an article about the "instigation of ethnic hostility and dissension," there were "no specific articles about acts of anti-Semitism." This is not convincing. Article 59-7 of the Criminal Code ("propaganda or agitation intended to incite national or religious hatred or dissension") was sufficient to send one to prison and the article provided for confiscation of the property of perpetrators of "widespread disturbances" and, under aggravated circumstances (for instance, class origin) – death. Article 59-7 was based on the "RSFSR Penal Code" of Feb 26, 1927, which widened the definition of "instigation of national hatred" making it equal in seriousness to "dissemination or preparation and storing of literature" (106).

Storing books! How familiar is that proscription, contained in the related law 58-10! [Translator's note: infamous Article 58 of the Penal Code of RSFSR dealt with so-called counter-revolutionary and anti-Soviet activities.]

Many brochures on anti-Semitism were published and "finally, Feb 19, 1929 Pravda devoted its lead article to the matter: 'Attention to the battle with anti-Semitism' " (107). A 1929 resolution of CK of Communist Party of Byelorussia stated that "counter-revolutionary nature of anti-Semitic incidents is often ignored" and that organs of justice should "intensify the fight, prosecuting both perpetrators of the law and those who inspire them" (108).

The secretary of the CK of Komsomol said "most dangerous in our conditions are secret anti-Semites who hide their anti-Semitic attitudes" (109). Those who are familiar with Soviet language understand: it is necessary to cut off suspected ways of thinking. (This recalls Grigory Landau, speaking of Jewish opponents: "They suspect or accuse other groups around them of anti-Semitism… Anyone who voices a negative opinion about Jews is accused of being an open anti-Semite and others are called secret anti-Semites" (110).

In 1929, a certain I. Zilberman in Daily Soviet Jurisprudence (no. 4) writes that there were too few court trials relating to anti-Semitism in Moscow Province. In the city of Moscow alone for the year there were only 34 cases (that is, every 10 days there was a trial for anti-Semitism somewhere in Moscow). The Journal of Narkomyust was read as an instruction manual for bringing such cases.

Could the most evil anti-Semite have thought up a better way to identify Jews with Soviet power in the opinion of the people?

It went so far that in 1930 the Supreme Court of RSFSR ruled that Article 59-7 "should not be used by members of national minorities seeking redress in conflicts of a personal nature"

(111). In other words the judicial juggernaut had already been wound up and was running at full speed.

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If we look at life of regular, not "commanding", Jewish folk, we see desolation and despair in formerly vibrant and thriving shtetls. Jewish Tribune reproduced report by a special official who inspected towns and shtetls in the south-west of Russia in 1923, indicating that as the most active inhabitants moved into cities, the remaining population of elders and families with many children lived to large extent by relying on humanitarian and financial aid from America (112).

Indeed, by the end of the period of "War Communism" (1918-1920) when all trade, or any buying and selling, were prohibited under threat of property confiscation and fines, the Jews were helped by Jewish charities like Joint through the all-Russian Public Committee for "assistance to victims of pogroms and destitute Jews". Several other charities protected the Jewish population later at different times, such as the SC (Society of Craftsmen, which after the revolution moved abroad), EKOPO (the Jewish committee for assistance to victims of war) and EKO (the Jewish colonizing society). In 1921-22, Soviet-based Jewish charities functioned in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Despite intervention and obstacles from YevSeks (Jewish communist organizations), "Joint provided Soviet Jews with extensive financial and other assistance", whereas SC "was dedicated to establishment and development of Jewish industry and agriculture in the south of Ukraine" during first half of 1920's (113).

The first Soviet census provides insight into Jewish life during the liberalized NEP period. Forty percent of Jews were classified as "active" (not dependents). Of those, 28% were public servants, 21% – craftsmen, 19% – industry workers (including apprentices), 12% – merchants, 9% – peasants, 1% – military men, and 10% were classified as "others". Among public servants, Jews were well represented in trade-related occupations. For instance, in Moscow business organizations 16% of the clerks were Jews, in credit and trade organizations – 13% (30% according to the Jewish Encyclopedia (114)), in public organizations – 19%, in fiscal organizations – 9%, in Sovdeps – 10%, with virtually no presence in police force. The percentages were correspondingly higher in the former Pale of Settlement areas, up to 62% in the state trade of Byelorussia, 44% – in Ukraine (77% in category of "private state servants"). The flow of Jewish workers into industry was much slower than government wished. There were almost no Jews among railroad men and miners' they rather preferred the professions of tailor, tanner, typographer, woodworker and food-related specialties and other fields of consumer industry. To recruit Jewish workers into industry, special professional schools were created with predominantly foreign funding from Jewish organizations abroad (115).

It was the time of NEP, which "improved economic conditions of Jewish population within a new, Soviet framework" (116). In 1924 Moscow 75% of the perfume and pharmaceutical

trade was in Jewish hands, as well as 55% of the manufactured goods trade, 49% of the jewelry trade, 39% of the small ware trade, and 36% of the wood-depots. "Starting business in a new place, a Jew usually run down prices in private sector to attract clientele" (117). The first and most prominent NEPmen often were Jews. To large extent, anger against them stemmed from the fact that they utilized the Soviet as well as the market systems: their commerce was routinely facilitated by their links and pulls in the Soviet apparatus. Sometimes such connections were exposed by authorities as in the case of famous "Paraffin Affair" (1922). During 1920's, there were abundant opportunities to buy up belongings of oppressed and persecuted "former" people, especially high quality or rare furniture. S. Ettinger noted that Jews made a majority of NEPmen and new-riches (118), which was supported by impressive list of individuals who "failed to pay state taxes and dues" in Izvestia in 1929 (119).

However, at the end of NEP, authorities launched "anti-capitalist" assault against financiers, merchants and manufacturers, many of whom were Jewish. As a result, many Jews turned into "Soviet trade servants" and continued working in the same spheres of finance, credit and commerce. A steamroller of merchandise and property confiscations, outright state robbery and social ostracizing (outclassing people into disenfranchised "lishenets" category) was advancing on private commerce. "Some Jewish merchants, attempting to avoid discriminating and endlessly increasing taxation, declared themselves as having no occupation during the census" (120). Nevertheless "virtually the entire Jewish male population in towns and shtetls… passed through the torture chambers of GPU" during the campaign of gold and jewelry extortion in the beginning of 1930's (121). Such things would be regarded as an impossible nightmare in Czar's Russia. Many Jewish families, to avoid the stigma of being "lishenets", moved into large cities. In the end, "only one-fifth of Soviet Jews lived in the traditional Jewish settlements by 1930's" (122).

"Socioeconomic experiments by the Soviet authorities including all kinds of nationalization and socialization had not only devastated the middle classes, but also hit badly the small merchants and craftsmen" (123). "Due to general lack of merchandise and solvent customers as well as low liquidity and exorbitant taxes, many shtetl merchants had no other choice but to close down their shops" and while the "most active left for cities", the remaining populace has nothing else to do but "aimlessly roam decrepit streets, loudly complaining about their fate, people and God". It is apparent that Jewish masses have completely lost their economic foundations" (124). It was really like that in many shtetls at that time. To address the problem, even special resolution of Sovnarkom was issued in 1929.

G. Simon, a former emigrant, came to USSR in the end of 1920's as an American businessman with a mission "to investigate shortages of Jewish craftsmen in tools". Later, in Paris, he published a book with an emotional and ironic title Jews Rule Over Russia. Describing the situation with Jewish manufacturing and trade, its oppression and destruction by Soviets, he also shares his impressions. Quoting many conversations, the general mood of

populace is pretty gloomy. “Many bad things, many crimes happen in Russia these days but it’s better to suppress that blinding hatred”; “they often fear that the revolution will inevitably end in the Russian manner, i.e. by mass-murder of Jews”. A local Bolshevik-Jew suggests that “it’s only the revolution that stands between the Jews and those wishing to aggrandize Russia by the rape of Jewish women and spilling the blood of Jewish children” (125).

A well-known economist B. D. Brutskus, who in 1920 provided a damning analysis of the socialist economy (he was expelled from the country in 1922 by Lenin), published an extensive article “Jewish population under Communist power” inContemporary Notes in 1928, chronicling the NEP in the former Pale of Settlement areas of Ukraine and Byelorussia.

The relative importance of private enterprise was declining as even the smallest merchants were deprived of their political rights (they became disenfranchised “lishenets” and couldn’t vote in Soviet elections), and, thus, their civil rights. (In contrast, handcraftsmen still enjoyed a certain semblance of rights.) “The fight of Soviet authorities against private enterprise and entrepreneurs is in large part a fight against Jewish populace.” Because in those days “not only almost the entire private city enterprise in Ukraine and Byelorussia was represented by Jews, but the Jewish participation in the small capitalist upperclass in capital cities of Moscow, St. Petersburg and Kharkov had also became very substantial” (126).

Brutskus distinguished three periods during the NEP: 1921-23, 1923-25 and 1925-27. “Development of private enterprise was least impeded by communists during first two and half years when Bolsheviks were still overwhelmed by their economic debacles”. “The first communist reaction followed between the end of 1923 and the spring of 1925.” Wholesale and shop trade in the former Pale of Settlement was destroyed, with only small flea market trade still permitted.” Crafts were “burdened by taxation. Artisans lost their last tools and materials (the latter often belonged to their peasant customers) to confiscations.” “The concept of Jewish equality virtually turned into fiction as two-thirds of Jews lost their voting rights.”

Because YevSek (Jewish section of the communist party) “inherited specific hatred toward petty Jewish bourgeoisie cultivated by earlier Jewish socialist parties and saw their own purpose in fighting it, its policy in the beginning of NEP was substantially different from the general party line”. During the second part of NEP, the “YevSek attempted to complete the dismantling of Jewish bourgeoisie, which began with “War Communism”. However, information about bleak life of Jewish population in USSR was leaking out into Jewish press abroad. “YevSeks attempted to blame that on the Czar’s regime which allegedly obstructed Jewish participation in productive labor, that is by communist definition, in physical labor. And since Jews still prefer “unproductive labor”, they inevitably suffer. Soviet authorities has nothing to do with it”.

But Brutskus objected claiming that in reality it was opposite. "The class of Jewish craftsmen nearly disappeared with the annihilation of petty Jewish manufacture… Indeed, professional the Jewish classes grew and become diversified while excessive numbers of petty Jewish middlemen slowly decreased under the Tsar because of the gradual development of ethnic Russian enterprise and deepening business connections between the Pale of Settlement and inner Russia. But now the Jewish population again was turned into a mass of petty middlemen".

During the third period of NEP, from spring of 1925 to autumn of 1926, large tax remissions were made for craftsmen and street vendors and village fairs were relieved of taxation while activities of state financial inspectors supervising large businesses were brought "under the law". The economy and well-being of the Jewish population started to recover rapidly. It was a boom for Jewish craftsmen and merchants specializing in agriculture. Petty manufacturing grew and "successfully competed for raw materials and resources with state manufacture in the western provinces". At the same time, "a new decree granted political (and, therefore, certain civil) rights to many Jews".

The second communist assault on private enterprise, which eventually resulted in the dismantling of NEP, began at the end of 1926. "First, private grain trade was prohibited, followed by bans on raw skins, oil seeds and tobacco trade… Private mills, creameries, tanneries and tobacco houses were expropriated. Fixed prices on shop merchandise were introduced in the summer of 1927. Most craftsmen couldn't work because of shortage of raw materials" (128).

The state of affairs in the shtetls of western Russia alarmed international Jewry. For instance, Pasmanik wrote in 1922 that Jews as people are doomed to disappear under Bolsheviks and that communists reduced all Russian Jewry into a crowd of paupers (128). However, the Western public (including Jews) did not want to hear all this. The West saw the USSR in good light partly because of general left-leaning of European intelligentsia but mainly because the world and American Jewry were now confident in bright future and security of Russian Jews and skillful Soviet propaganda only deepened this impression.

Benevolent public opinion was extremely instrumental for Soviet leaders in securing Western, and especially American, financial aid, which was indispensable for economical recovery after their brave "War Communism". As Lenin said at the Party Congress in 1921, "as the revolution didn't spread to other countries, we should do anything possible to secure assistance of big progressive capitalism and for that we are ready to pay hundreds of millions and even billions from our immense wealth, our vast resources, because otherwise our recovery would take decades" (129). And the business went smoothly as progressive capitalism showed no scruples about acquiring Russian wealth. The first Soviet international bank, Roskombank, was founded in 1922. It was headed by the already mentioned Olof Aschberg (who was reliably delivering aid to Lenin during entire revolutionary period) and by former Russian private bankers (Shlezinger, Kalashkin and Ternovsky). There was also Max

May of Morgan Guaranty Trust in the US who was of great assistance to Soviets. Now they developed a scheme allowing Roskombank to directly purchase goods in US, despite the futile protests from the Secretary of State Charles Hughes, who asserted that this kind of relations meant a de-facto recognition of Soviet regime. A Roskombank Swedish adviser, professor G. Kassel, said that it is reckless to leave Russia with all her resources alone (130).

Concessioners flocked into USSR where they were very welcome. Here we see Lenin's favorite, Armand Hammer, who in 1921 decided "to help rebuild Ural industry" and procured a concession on asbestos mines at Alapayevsk. Lenin mentioned in 1921 that Hammer's father will provide "two million stones of bread on very favorable terms (5%) in exchange for Ural jewelry to be sold in America" (131). And Hammer shamelessly exported Russian art treasures in exchange for the development of pencil manufacturing. (Later, in the times of Stalin and Khrushchev, Hammer frequented Moscow, continuing to export Russian cultural treasures (e.g., church utensils, icons, paintings, china, etc. in huge volumes.)

However, in 1921-22 large sums were donated by American Jewry and distributed in Russia by the American Relief Administration (ARA) for assistance to the victims of "bloody pogroms, for the rescue of towns in the South of Russia and for the peasantry of Volga Region". Many ARA associates were Jews (132).

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Another novel idea from the 20's – not so much an idea originating among Jews – as one dreamed up to appeal to them, was Jewish colonization of agricultural land. It is said their history of dispersion had denied them possibilities in agriculture and forced them to engage in money lending, commerce and trade. Now at last Jews could occupy the land and thereby renounce the harmful ways of the past to labor productively under Soviet skies, and thus putting to flight the unflattering myths which had grown up about them.

Soviet authorities turned to the idea of colonization partially to improve productivity, but mostly for political reasons. This was sure to bring a swell of sympathy, but more important, financial aid. Brutskus writes: "the Soviet government, needing credits, searched for support among the foreign bourgeoisie and highly valued its relations with the foreign Jewish bourgeoisie." However, towards 1924 the donations stopped pouring in and even "the Jewish American Charity ('Joint Committee') was forced to halt its work in Europe. To again collect large amounts of money (as they had through the American Relief Administration in 1921), they needed to create, as they say in the U.S., a 'boom'. Colonization became the 'boom' for Jewish charities. The grandiose project for resettling 100,000 Jewish families on their own land was, apparently, mostly a public relations ploy (133). The committee for the "State Land Trust for Jewish Laborers" (KomZET) was founded In 1924, followed by the "all-Soviet Volunteer Land Society of Jewish Laborers (OZET). (I remember as school children we were made to join and pay membership dues – by bringing money from home, to ODD

(Society of Friends of the Children) and OZET. In many countries sister organizations to OZET sprung up.

It was immediately clear that "the assistance of the Soviet government in the passage of poor Jews to the land" was "a matter of international significance… Through this the foreign proletariat could judge the "power and solidity of the Soviet government." This development had the active participation and financial support of the powerful America Joint. The Jewish Chronicle of London, Oct 16,1925: "The Crimea has been offered as replacement for Palestine. Why send Jews to Palestine which is so unproductive… and which will mean so much sacrifice and hard work… when the rich land of Ukraine and fruited fields of the Crimea are smiling upon suffering Jews. Moscow will be the benefactor and defender of Russian Jewry and will be able to seek moral support from Jews around the globe… As well, the plan will cost nothing, as American Jews are covering all expenses" (134)." [Translator's note: find this quote in English]

It didn't take the Russian émigré press long to recognize the Soviet maneuver. P. Struve in the Parisian journal Renaissancewrote: "this entire undertaking serves to bind Jewry – both Russian and international – to communist power and definitively mark Jews with the brand of communism" (135). In a lead editorial from the Berlin Rul: "It's true… the world identifies the Bolsheviks with the Jews. There is a need to further connect them with shared responsibility for the fate of hundreds of thousands of poor. Then you can trick wealthy American Jews with a threat: the fall of Soviet power followed by a mass pogrom which sweeps away the Jewish societies they founded. Therefore they will support Soviet power at all costs" (136).

In a fateful irony, the Bolshevik bluff met American enterprise and the Americans fell for it, not knowing what was going on in the USSR (137).

Actually, the world Jewish community was excited by hope in the rehabilitation of Jewish agriculture. In September, 1925 at the all-German session… the Jewish bourgeoisie under the leadership of the Director of the German National Bank, Hialmar Schacht decided to support the project. Leon Blum founded the "Jewish Construction Fund" in France which sent tractors to the settlers. The "Society for Aid for Jewish Land Colonization" was founded in New York. In countries around the globe, all the way to South Africa, money was collected for the colonization plan from Social Democrats, anarchists, and, so they say, ordinary workers.

The editors of the American magazine Morning Journal, posed the question – as did many others – "Is it ethical for Russian Jews to colonize land that was expropriated?" The Jewish Chronicle recalled that most of the former land owners were in prison, shot or exiled. They were answered by the leading American jurist Louis Marshall and chairman of the World Joint Committee who claimed the beneficent right of revolutionary expropriation (138). Indeed, during the years 1919-1923 "more than 23,000 Jews had settled in former estates

near the towns and villages in the former Pale of Settlement". By spring 1923, no more of this land remained available and the first small groups of Jews started to form for resettlement to the free steppe land in Southern Ukraine (139). This movement picked up speed after 1925.

The international Jewish Agro-Joint was formed by Marshall with the banker Paul Warburg as the director. Here our chroniclers of the history of communism decline to issue a denunciation of class enemies, and instead, approve of their efforts.

The Agro-Joint concluded an agreement with KomZET about the contribution of tractors, farm machinery, seed, the digging of artesian wells and professional training for Jewish youth. EKO assisted as well. At a 1926 session of OZET Kalinin spoke out forcefully against any plans for Jewish assimilation and, instead, proposed a wide-ranging program for Jewish autonomy known in the West as the "Kalinin Declaration."

The early plans called for resettlement to the south of Ukraine and northern Crimea of approximately 100,000 families or 20% of the entire Jewish population of the USSR. The plans contemplated separate Jewish national regions as well. ("Many remained jobless and nevertheless declined the opportunity to work" and "only half of all Jews who agreed to resettle actually took up residence in the villages they were supposed to resettle in" (140).)

However, American Zionists objected to the OZET plan and saw in the "propaganda for the project of widespread Jewish agricultural colonization in the Soviet Union a challenge to Zionism and its idea for the settlement of Eretz Israel." OZET falsely claimed its plans did not contradict at all the idea of colonization of Palestine (141).

Great hope was placed on Crimea. There were 455,000 hectares given over to Jewish colonization in Ukraine and Byelorussia; 697,000 hectares set aside in Crimea for that purpose. According to the 10-Year Plan for the settlement of Jews in Crimea, the Jewish proportion of the population was to grow from 8% in 1929 to 25% in 1939. (It was assumed that the Jews would substantially outnumber the Tatars by that time.) "There shall be no obstacles to the creation in the Crimean ASSR a Northern Crimean Autonomous Jewish Republic or oblast" (142).

The settlement of the Jews in the Crimea provoked the hostility of the Tatars ("Are they giving Crimea to the Jews?") and dissatisfaction of local landless peasants. Larin writes "evil and false rumors are circulating throughout the country about removal of land from non-Jews, the expulsion of non-Jews and the particularly strong support the authorities have given to the Jewish settlers". It went so far that the chairman of the CIK of the Crimean ASSR, Veli Ibraimov published an interview in the Simferopol paper Red Crimea (Sept 26, 1926) which Larin does not quote from, but which he claims was a manifestation of "evil bourgeois chauvinism" and a call for a pogrom.

Ibraimov also promulgated a resolution and projects, which were "not yet ready for publication" (also not quoted by Larin). For this, Larin denounced Ibraimov to the Central Control Commission of CK of VKPb, recounting the incident with pride in his book. As a result Ibraimov was "removed and then shot", after which the Jewish colonization of Crimea gained strength.

As was typical for the communist regime, the closed trial of Ibraimov resulted in a political conviction for "connections with a Kulak bandit gang," officially, for "banditry" (143). A certain Mustafa, the assistant to the chair of the CIK, was also shot with Ibraimov as a bandit (144).

Rumors of the effective assistance given to the Jewish settlers did not die down. The authorities tried to counter them. A government newspaper in 1927 wrote "the generous assistance to Jewish settlers" is coming from "Jewish community organizations" (without mentioning they were Western organizations), and not from the government as is rumored. To refute the rumors, Shlikhter (that young brawler from Kiev's Duma in October, 1905), now Narkom of Agriculture of Ukraine, toured over the South of Ukraine. Rumors that the Jews were not working the land given to them but were renting it out or hiring farm laborers, were met with: "we haven't observed this behavior, but the Jewish settlers must be forbidden to rent out their land" and "the unhealthy atmosphere surrounding the Jewish resettlement must be countered with the widest possible education campaign" (145).

The article allows one to judge about the scale of events. It states that 630 Jewish households moved into Kherson Province between the end of 1925 and July of 1927 (146). In 1927, there were 48 Jewish agricultural settlements in Ukraine with a total population of 35,000. In Crimea, 4463 Jews lived in Jewish agricultural settlements in 1926 (147). Other sources implausibly claimed that "by 1928, 220,000 Jews lived in Jewish agricultural colonies" (148). Similarly, Larin mentioned 200,000 by the beginning of 1929. Where does this order of magnitude discrepancy come from? Larin here contradicts himself, saying that in 1929 the share of Jews in agriculture was negligible, less than 0.2% (and almost 20% among merchants and 2% in population in general) (149).

Mayakovsky saw it differently:

"A hard toiling Jew

Tills the rocky land"

However, the program of Jewish land colonization, for all practical purposes, was a failure. For many of the settlers there was little motivation to stay. It didn't help that the resettlement and the building project had come from on high and the money from western organizations. A lot of government assistance for Jewish settlers didn't help. It is little known that tractors from neighboring collective farms were ordered to till Jewish land (150). Despite the flow of 2-3 thousand resettling Jewish families, by the end of five year work

"Jewish settlements in Crimea" listed only around 5 thousand families" instead of pre-planned 10 to 15 thousand. The reason was that settlers frequently returned to their place of origin or moved to the cities of Crimea or other parts of the country (151). This mass departure of Jews from agriculture in the 1920's and 30's resembles similar Jewish withdrawal from agricultural colonies in the 19th century, albeit now there were many new occupations available in industry (and in administration, a prohibited field for Jews in Tsarist Russia) (152).

Eventually, collectivization arrived. Suddenly in 1930 Semyon Dimanstein, for many years the head of the "Jewish Section of CK of VKPb," a staunch communist who bravely put up with all Soviet programs in the 20's, came out in the press against universal collectivization in the national regions. He was attempting to protect the Jewish colony from collectivization which he had been "warned about" (153). However, collectivization came, not sparing the "fresh shoots of Jewish land stewardship" (154). At almost the same time, the Jewish and non-Jewish Kolkhozes were combined under the banner of "internationalism" (155) and the program of Jewish settlement in Ukraine and Crimea was finally halted.

The principal Soviet project of Jewish colonization was at Birobidzhan, a territory "nearly the size of Switzerland" between the 2 branches of the Amur river near the Chinese border. It has been described variously. In 1956 Khrushchev bragged in conversations with Canadian communists that the soil was rich, the climate was southern, there was "much sun and water" and "rivers filled with fish" and "vast forests." The Socialist Vestnik described it as covered with "wild taiga… swampland made up a significant portion" of the territory (156). According the Encyclopedia Britannica: "a plain with swamps in places," but a "fertile land along the Amur" (157).

The project came about in 1927 from the KomZET (a committee of the CIK) and was intended to: "turn a significant part of the Jewish population into a settled agricultural people in one location" (Kalinin). Also the Jewish Autonomous Republic was to serve as a counterweight to Zionism, creating a national homeland with at least half a million population (158). (One possible motive behind the plan which cannot be excluded: to wedge a loyal Soviet population into the hostile Cossack frontier.)

OZET sent a scientific expedition to Birobidzhan in 1927 and, before large settlements of Jews began arriving, in 1928 started preparations and building for the settlement using laborers from the local populace and wandering work crews of Chinese and Koreans.

Older residents of the area – Trans-Baikal Cossacks exiled there between the 1860's and the 1880's and already tested by the hardships of the frontier woods – remember being concerned about the Jewish settlement. The Cossacks needed vast tracts of land for their farming methods and feared they would be crowded out of lands they used for hunting and hay harvesting. The KomZET commission report was "a preliminary plan for the possible gradual resettlement of 35,000 families". But reality was different. The CIK of VKPb in 1928

assigned Birobidzhan for Jewish colonization and preparation of first settler trains began immediately. “For the first time ever, city dwellers (from Ukraine and Byelorussia) without any preparation for agricultural labor were sent to farm the land.” (They were lured by the prospect of having the status of “lishenets” removed.) (159).

The Komsomol published the “Monthly OZET” and Pioneer delegations traveled around the country collecting for the Birobidzhan resettlement.

The hastily dispatched Jewish families were horrified by the conditions they met upon arrival. They moved into barracks at the Tikhonkaya railroad station, in the future town of Birobidzhan. ”Among the inhabitants… were some who never left the barracks for the land, living off the loans and credits they managed to obtain for making the move. Others less nimble, lived in abject poverty” (160).

”During the first year of work at Birobidzhan only 25 huts were built, only 125 hectares were plowed and none were planted. Many did not remain in Birobidzhan; 1,000 workers arrived in the Spring of 1928 and by July, 25% of all those who arrived in 1928 had left. “By February 1929 more than half of the population had abandoned Birobidzhan” (161). From 1928 to 1933 more than 18,000 arrived, yet the Jewish population grew only by 6,000. By some calculations “only 14% of those Jews who resettled remained in 1929” (169). They returned either to their homes or moved to Khabarovsk and Vladivostok.

Larin, who devotes no small number of reasoned and impassioned pages to the building of Jewish agriculture sniffs that “an unhealthy fuss… has been raised around Birobidzhan… a utopian settlement of a million Jews… Resettlement was practically presented as a national obligation of Soviet Jews, Zionism turned inside out… a kind of back-to-the-province movement”. While international Jewish organizations provided no finances for Birobidzhan, from the beginning “considering it too expensive and risky for them” (163). More likely the western Jewish organizations, Agro-Joint, ORT and EKO could not support the distant project beyond the Urals (164). It wasn’t a “Jewish plan,” but a scheme of Soviet authorities eager to tear down and build life anew in the country.

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From the October revolution to the end of the 20’s the lives of ordinary Jews were affected by the actions of Yevseks – members of the YevSek (The Jewish section of the CK of VKPb.) Besides the Jewish Commissariat, an active Jewish organization grew up in the VKPb. As well, from 1918, local organizations were formed in the guberniyas. They created an environment fanatically inspired with the idea and ideas of communism, even more so than was Soviet authority itself and at times these organizations even opposed Soviet projects. For example, “at the insistence of the YevSek, the Jewish Commissariat decreed Hebrew to be a language of ‘reaction and counter-revolution’ in early 1919, requiring Jewish schools to teach in Yiddish” (165). The Central Bureau of the YevSek was part of the CK of VKPb and local

YevSeks operated in the former Pale of Settlement. "The purpose of the YevSek was communist education and Sovietization of the Jewish population in their native language of Yiddish."

From 1924 to 1928 responsibility for "all Jewish education and culture" was under the Jewish Bureaus of the republic-level administrative bodies, but these were abolished for "excesses in forced Yiddishization" and more power accrued to the YevSek (166).

The activities of the YevSek in the 20's were contradictory. "On one hand they carried out active agitprop work in communist education in Yiddish and mercilessly battled against Judaism, traditional Jewish education, Jewish social structures, independent Jewish organizations, political parties and movements, Zionism and Hebrew. On the other hand it opposed assimilation with its support of the Yiddish language and a Yiddish culture and organizations of Jewish education, Jewish scientific research and activity to improve the economic status of Soviet Jews. In this "the YevSek often held a more radical position than even the central party bodies" (167).

The anti-Zionist YevSek was made up "to a large degree" of "former Bundists and socialist-territorialists" (168) who were thought of as traitors or "neophyte communists" in VKPb. The purpose of the YevSek was to develop communist influence on Russian Jewry and to create a "Jewish Soviet nation" isolated from world Jewry. But at the same time its actions paradoxically turned it from a technical apparatus urging the Jewish population to build socialism into a focal point for Jewish life in the USSR. A split arose in the YevSek between supporters of "forced assimilation" and those who thought its work was a "necessary means of preservation of the Jewish people" (169).

The Book of Russian Jewry observes with sympathy that the activity of the YevSek "still carried a clear and expressly Jewish stamp under the banner of the Proletariat." For instance in 1926 using the slogan "to the countryside!," [meant to rouse interest in working in and propagandizing rural areas] the YevSek came up with "to the Shtetl!"

"…This activity resonated widely in Jewish circles in Poland and in the U.S." The author further calls it "a many-faceted Jewish nationalism in communist form" (170). But in 1926 the CP halted the activity of the YevSek and turned it into the Jewish Bureau. In 1930 the Jewish Bureau was closed along with all national sections of VKPb (171). After that the activity of the YevSeks continued under the banner of communism. "Russian Jewry lost all forms of self-expression, including communistic forms" (172).

The end of the YevSek symbolized the final dissolution of the Bund movement "to allow a separate nationalist existence, even if it went against strict social-democratic theory" (171). However, after the YevSek was abolished, many of the former Yevseks and Jewish socialists did not come to their senses and put the "building of socialism" higher than the good of their own people or any other good, staying to serve the party-government apparatus. And that overflowing service was evident more than anything.

Whether statistically or using a wealth of singular examples, it is obvious that Jews pervaded the Soviet power structure in those years. And all this happened in the state that persecuted freedom of speech, freedom of commerce and religion, not to mention its denigration of human worth.

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Bikerman and Pasmanik paint a very gloomy picture of the state of Jewish culture in the USSR in 1923: "all is torn up and trampled underfoot in the field of Jewish culture" (174). "All foundations of a nationalist Jewish culture are shaken and all that is sacred is stomped into the mud" (175). S. Dubnov saw something similar in 1922 and wrote about "rueful wreckage" and a picture "of ruin and the progress of dark savages, destroying the last remnants of a bygone culture" (176).

However, Jewish historiography did not suffer destruction in the first 10 years after the revolution, as is attested to by the range of allowed publications. Government archives, including those from the department of police, opened after the revolution have given Jewish scholars a view on Jewish participation in the revolutionary movement, pogroms, and "blood libel" trials. The Jewish Historical-Ethnographical Society was founded in 1920 and published the 2-volume Material on theHistory of anti-Jewish Pogroms in Russia. The Society later came under attack from the YevSek and it was abolished in 1929. The journals, The Jewish News and The Jewish Chronicle were shut down in the mid-twenties. S. Dubnov's Jewish Antiquity remained in publication (even after he left the USSR in 1922) but was closed in 1930. The Jewish Ethnographical Museum functioned from 1916, but was closed in 1930 (177).

In the 1920's, Jewish culture had two divergent fates — one in Hebrew and one in Yiddish. Hebrew was strongly repressed and forbidden as authorities saw it as a carrier of religion and Zionism. Before the consolidation of Soviet power in the years 1917-1919 "there were more than 180 books, brochures, and journals in Hebrew" (mostly in Odessa, but also in Kiev and Moscow). The feeling that the fate of Hebrew was connected with the fate of the victorious communist revolution held in the early 20's "among young people attempting to create a 'revolutionary literary tribune, under whose banner they hoped to unite the creative youthful strength of world Jewry'" (178). However at the insistence of the YevSek, Hebrew was declared a "reactionary language" and already in 1919 the People's Commissariat of Education had "forbidden the teaching of Hebrew in all educational institutions. The removal of all Hebrew books from libraries had begun" (179).

Yiddish culture fared much better. Yiddish was the language of the Jewish masses. According to the 1926 census, 73% of Jews listed Yiddish as their mother tongue (181) (another source cites a figure of 66% (181)) – that is the Jewish population could preserve its culture in Yiddish. Soviet authorities used this. If, in the early years of Soviet power and Bolshevism the opinion prevailed that Jews should discard their language and nationality, later the Jewish

Commissariat at the Narkomat of Nationalities, the YevSek, and the Jewish sections of the republican narkomats of education began to build Soviet culture in Yiddish. In the 20's Yiddish was declared one of the official languages of Byelorussia; In Odessa of the 20's and even the 30's it was a language of many government institutions, with "Jewish hours" on the radio and court proceedings in Yiddish (182).

"A rapid growth in Yiddish schools began in 1923 throughout the Soviet Union." Beginning in 1923 and continuing through 1930 a program of systematic "Yiddishization" was carried out, even forced, upon Jewish schools in the former Pale of Settlement. Many schools were switched to Yiddish without considering the wishes of parents. In 1923 there were 495 Yiddish schools with 70,000 Jewish children, by 1928 there were 900 schools and in 1930 they had 160,000 children. (This can be partially explained by the fact that Ukrainians and Byelorussians at this time received full cultural autonomy and saw Jewish children as potential agents of Russification; Jewish parents didn't want their children in Ukrainian or Byelorussian schools and there were no more Russian schools — they had no choice but to go to Yiddish schools. They did not study Jewish history in these schools; instead there was "class war and the Jews" (183). (Just as in the Russian schools there was no study of Russian history, or of any history, only "social sciences".) Throughout the 20's "even those few elements of a specifically Jewish education were gradually driven out of Soviet Jewish schools." By the early 30's the autonomously functioning system of Soviet Jewish schools had been officially done away with (184).

From 1918 there were independent Jewish schools of higher education — ENU (Jewish People's University) until 1922 in Moscow; PENU in Petrograd which became Petrograd IVEZ (Institute of Higher Jewish Learning, one of whose founders and later Rector was Semyon Lozinsky) boasting "a number of distinguished scholars among faculty and large number of Jewish graduates". Supported by Joint, IVEZ functioned until 1925. Jewish divisions were established at educational science departments at Byelorussian University (1922) and at Second Moscow State University (1926). Central Jewish CP School teaching in Yiddish was established in 1921. Jewish educational system included special educational science technical colleges and more than 40 industrial and agricultural training schools (185).

Jewish culture continued to exist and even received no small encouragement — but on the terms of Soviet authorities. The depths of Jewish history were closed. This took place on a background of the destruction of Russian historical and philosophical sciences complete with arrests of scholars.

Jewish culture of the 20's could more accurately be called a Soviet "proletarian" culture in Yiddish. And for that kind of Jewish culture the government was ready to provide newspapers and theatre. Forty years later the Book of Russian Jewry gives a less than gloomy assessment of the cultural situation of Jews in the USSR in the early Soviet years. In Moscow the worldwide Jewish Telegraphic agency (ETA) continued to exist into the 40's as an independent unit — the only such agency in the Soviet nation that did not come under

TASS, sending communications abroad (of course, subject to Soviet censorship). Newspapers were published in Yiddish, the main one being the house organ of the YevSek, The Moscow Der Amos from 1920 to 1938. According to Dimanstein there were 34 Yiddish publishers in 1928.

Yiddish literature was encouraged, but, naturally, with a purpose: to turn Jews away from an historical Jewish past; to show "before October" as a gloomy prologue to the epoch of happiness and a new dawn; to smear anything religious and find in the Soviet Jew the "new man." Even with all this, it was so attractive to some prominent Jewish writers who had left the country that they started to return to the USSR: poets David Gofstein ("always suspected of harboring nationalist sentiment") and Leib Kvitko ("easily accommodated to Soviet environment and become a prolific poet") returned in 1925; Perez Markish ("easily understands the needs of the party") — in 1926; Moses Kulbak and Der Nistor (the real name of the latter was Pinkhos Kaganovich, he later wrote novel Mashber Family characterized as the most "un-Soviet and liberal work of Jewish prose in Soviet Union") — returned in 1928. David Bergelson returned in 1929, he "paid tribute to those in power: 'the revolution has a right to cruelty' (186). (Which he, Markish and Kvitko were to experience themselves in 1952.)

The "bourgeois" Hebrew culture was suppressed. A group of writers headed by H.N. Byalik left for Palestine in 1921. Another group "of Hebrew writers existed until the mid-30's, occasionally publishing in foreign journals. Some of these authors were arrested and disappeared without a trace while others managed to escape the Soviet Union" (187).

Regarding Jewish culture expressed in Russian language, Yevseks interpreted it as the "result of government-directed efforts to assimilate Jews in Tsarist Russia." Among those writing in Yiddish, a split between "proletarian" writers and "companions" developed in mid-20's, like in Soviet literature at large. Majority of mainstream authors then switched to Russian language (188).

The Jewish Chamber Theater in Yiddish in Moscow flowered since 1921 at a high artistic level with government aid (in 1925 it was transformed into the State Jewish Theater, GosET). It traveled through Europe and became an unexpected representative of Soviet power in the eyes of world Jewry. It made fun of pre-revolutionary ways and religious life of the shtetl. Mikhoels excelled as an actor and in 1928 became the director (189).

The history of the Hebrews theater "Gabima," which began before the revolution was much more complicated. Originally supported by Lunacharsky, Gorky and Stanislavsky it was persecuted as a "Zionist nest" by the YevSek and it took a decision by Lenin to allow it to exist. "Gabima" became a government theatre. It remained the only outpost of Hebrew in the USSR, though it was clear it had no future (190). (The theatre critic A. Kugel said it had departed from Jewish daily life and lost its Jewish spirit (191).) In 1926 the troupe went on a European tour and did not return, disappearing from history soon after (192).

By contrast, the government Yiddish theatre "was a real boon for Jewish theater arts in the USSR." In the early 30's there were 19 professional Yiddish theater groups… with a training school at GosET in Moscow, and Jewish dramatic arts studios in Kiev, Minsk and Moscow (193).

Here it is worth remembering the posthumous treatment of the ill-fated "Jewish Gogol" Semen Ushkevitch. His bookEpisodes, published in 1926 "satirizes revolution-era Jewish bourgeois". He died in 1927 and in 1928 the Soviet censor banned his play Simka, The Rabbit Hearted based on his earlier book. As an anti- bourgeois work it should have been fine, but "taking place in a Jewish setting and making fun of the stupidity, cowardice and greed of its subjects, it was banned because of fears that it would cause Judeophobic feelings" (194).

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In the meantime what was the condition of Zionist organizations in the USSR? They were fundamentally incompatible with communist authority and were accused of "international imperialism" and collaboration with the Entente. Because of their international standing the Soviets had to deal carefully with them. In 1920 the YevSek declared a "civil war on the Jewish street" against the Zionist organizations. Repression of Zionism deepened with the ban on Hebrew. However "anti-Zionist pressure did not exist everywhere and was not sufficiently severe" — that is "long-term imprisonment and exile were relatively rare." In spring 1920 right-wing Zionists were frightened with arrests, but on May 1 were amnestied.

The dual policy of the Kremlin was apparent in its discussions with representatives of the World Zionist Organization. Chicherin did not dismiss out of hand it's the latter's solicitations as the Soviets were "not yet ready to denounce Zionism once and for all" as had the YevSek. The more so since "from the beginning of NEP, lessening government pressure gave Zionist groups a breathing space" (195). Interestingly, Dzerzhinsky wrote in 1923 that "the program of the Zionists is not dangerous to us, on the contrary I consider it useful" and again in 1924 "principally, we can be friends with Zionists" (196). The Central Zionist Bureau existed in Moscow from 1920 to 1924. In March of 1924 its members were arrested and only after much pleading from within the country and from overseas was exile to Central Asia replaced with exile abroad (197). In 1923 only two officially permitted Zionist organizations remained: Poale-Zion and the "legal" portion of the youth organization Gekhaluz, whose purpose was agricultural colonization of Palestine. They saw experience with collective farms in the USSR as preparation for this. They published a journal from 1924 to 1926 (198). Even the left-wing of the Zionist socialist party Zirei-Zion ('Youth of Zion') adopted a sharper tone vis a vis the Bolsheviks, and when the arrests in 1924, though short in duration, became more widespread they went underground. This underground movement was finally dispersed only in the late 20's.

"Jewish blood will not oil the wheels of revolution," an organizational slogan of the movement, conveys the sense of the underground Zirei-Zion with its significant youth

organizations in Kiev and Odessa. Regarding the government, "they formally recognized Soviet authority, but at the same time declared opposition to the dictatorship of the communist party." Much of its work was directed against the YevSek. "In particular, they agitated against the Crimean resettlement plan, seeing it as disturbing their 'national isolation'." From 1926 the party weakened and then disappeared (199).

There was a wave of arrests of Zionists from September to October of 1924. Some of those arrested were tried in secret and given sentences of 3 to 10 years in the camps. But in 1925 Zionist delegates were assured by the CIK of VKPb (Smidovitch) and the Sovnarkom (Rykov) and the GPU that they had nothing against Zionists as long as they "did not arouse the Jewish population against Soviet power" (200).

D. Pasmanik suggested in 1924 that "Zionists, Orthodox and nationalist Jews should be in the front ranks of those fighting alongside Soviet power and the Bolshevik worldview" (201). But there was no united front and no front rank.

In the second half of the 20's, persecution of the Zionists was renewed and the exchange of prison sentences for exile abroad was sharply curtailed. "In 1928 authorities dissolved, the until then quasi-legal Poale-Zion and liquated the legal Gekhaluz, closing its farms… Almost all underground Zionist organizations were destroyed at that time." Opportunities to leave declined sharply after 1926. Some of the Zionists remained in prison or were exiled (202).

The mass attraction of young urban Jews to communist and Soviet culture and programs was matched with a no less stubborn resistance from religious Jewry and older Jews from the former Pale. The party used the rock of the YevSek to crush and suppress this resistance.

"One only has to be in a Jewish city such as Minsk or Vitebsk to see how all that was once worthy in Judaism, respected and worthy of respect has been turned upside down, crushed with poverty, insult, and hopelessness and how those pushed into higher places are the dissolute, frivolous, arrogant and brazen" (203). Bolshevik power "become the carrier of terrible ruin, material and moral… in our Jewish world" (204). "The mass of Jewish Bolsheviks on one hand and of Jewish NEPmen on the other indicate the depth of the cultural collapse of Jewry. And if radical healing from Bolshevism among the Russian people is to come from a revival of religious, moral and nationalist life then the Jewish idea must work for that also in their lives" (205).

And work they did, but indicators vary as to degree of intensity and success. A near contemporary considered "Jewish society turned out either to have no rudder and no sail or was confused and in this confusion spiritually turned away from its sources" in contrast to Russian society where there was still some resistance, albeit "clumsy and unsuccessful" (206).

From the end of the 20's to the beginning of the 30's the Jews abandoned their traditional way of life on a mass scale" (207)."In the past 20 years Russian Jewry has gone further and further away from its historical past… killing the Jewish spirit and Jewish tradition" (208).

And a few years later on the very eve of WWII "with the ascension in Russia of the Bolshevik dictatorship, the fight between fathers and children in the Jewish street has taken a particularly bitter form" (209).

Taking stock a half-century later, M. Agursky reminisces in Israel, that the misfortunes that befell Jews after the revolution to a large degree were brought on by the renunciation by Jewish youth of its religion and national culture, "the singular, exclusive influence of communist ideology…" "The mass penetration by Jews in all areas of Russian life" and of the Soviet leadership in the first 20 years after the revolution turned not to be constructive for Jews, but harmful (210).

Finally, an author in the 1990's writes: "Jews were the elite of the revolution and on the winning side. That's a peculiar fact of the Russian internationalist socialist revolution. In the course of modernizing, Jewry was politically Bolshevized and socially Sovietized: The Jewish community as an ethnic, religious and national structure disappeared without a trace" (211). Jewish youth coming to Bolshevism were intoxicated by its new role and influence. For this, others too would have gladly given up their nationality. But this turning from the old ways to internationalism and atheism was not the same as assimilation into the surrounding majority, a centuries-old Jewish fear. This was leaving the old, along with all other youth, to come together and form a new Soviet people. "Only a small stream was truly assimilationalist in the old sense," like those people who converted to Orthodox Christianity and wished their own dissolution in the Russian culture. We find one such example in attorney Y. Gurevich, legal defender of metropolitan Venamin during his fatal trial in 1922 (212).

The Jewish Encyclopedia writes of Jewish workers in the "party and government apparatus of economic, scientific and even military organizations and institutions, that most did not hide their Jewish origins, but they and their families quickly absorbed Russian culture and language and being Jewish lost its cultural content" (213).

Yes, the culture which sustained them suffered, "Soviet Man" was created, but the decades which followed showed that a remnant of Jewish self-awareness was preserved and remained. Even in the flood of the internationalism of the 20's, mixed marriages (between Jews and Russians or Jews and any non-Jew), as measured from 1924-1926, were only 6.3% of the total marriages for Jews in the USSR, including 16.8% in RSFSR, but only 2.8% in Byelorussia and 4.5% in Ukraine (214) (according to another source, on average in USSR, 8.5%; in RSFSR, 21%; in Byelorussia, 3.2%; and in Ukraine, 5% (215)). Assimilation had only begun.

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And what was the status of the Jewish religion in the new conditions? Bolshevik power was hostile to all religions. During the years of the hardest blows against the Orthodox Church, Jewish religious practice was treated with restraint. "In March, 1922 Dar Amos noted that the department of agitprop of the Central Committee would not offend religious feelings… In

the 20's this tolerance did not extend to Russian Orthodoxy, which the authorities considered one of the main enemies of the Soviet order" (216). Nevertheless, the confiscation of church valuables extended to synagogues as well. E. Yarolslavsky wrote in Izvestia an article titled "What Can be Taken from a Synagogue": Often Rabbis will say there is nothing of value in a synagogue. Usually that is the case… The walls are usually bare. But menorahs are often made of silver. These must be confiscated." Three weeks before that 16 silver objects were taken from Jewish preaching house on Spasso-Glinischevsky avenue and in the neighboring choral synagogue "57 silver objects and 2 of gold." Yaroslavsky further proposes a progressive tax on those who buy costly seats in the synagogue (217). (Apparently, this proposal went nowhere.)

However "functionaries from the YevSek demanded of authorities that the same policy applied towards Christianity be carried out towards Judaism" (218). In the Jewish New Year, 1921 the YevSek orchestrated a "public trial of the Jewish religion" in Kiev. The Book of Russian Jewry describes this and other show trials in 1921-1922: there was a court proceeding against a Cheder (a traditional elementary school with instruction in Hebrew) in Vitebsk, against a Yeshiva (a Jewish school for study of the traditional, texts, the Talmud, the Torah, and the Rabbinical literature) in Rostov and even against Day of Atonement in Odessa. They were intentionally conducted in Yiddish, as the YeSsek explained, so that Jewish Bolsheviks would "judge" Judaism.

Religious schools were closed by administrative order and in December 1920 the Jewish section of the Narkomat of Education issued a encyclical about the liquidation of Cheders and Yeshivas. "Nevetheless, large numbers of Cheders and Yeshivas continued teaching semi-legally or completely underground for a long time after that" (219). "In spite of the ban on religious education, as a whole the 20's were rather a liberal period for Jewish religious life in the USSR" (220).

"[A]t the request of Jewish laborers," of course, there were several attempts to close synagogues, but this met with "bitter opposition from believers." Still "during the 20's the central synagogues were closed in Vitebsk, Minsk, Gomel, Kharkov, Bobruisk" (221). The central Moscow synagogue on Maroseika managed stay open thanks to the efforts of Rabbi Maze in the face of Dzerzhinsky and Kalinin (222). In 1926, the "choral synagogue in Kiev was closed" and children's Yiddish theatre opened in its place (223). But "the majority of synagogues continued to function. In 1927, 1034 synagogues and prayer halls were functioning in Ukraine and the number of synagogues towards the end of the 20s' exceeded the number in 1917" (224).

Authorities attempted to institute "Living Synagogues" based on the model of the "Living Church" imposed upon the Russian Orthodox Church. A "portrait of Lenin was to be hung in a prominent place" of such a synagogue, the authorities brought in "red Rabbis" and "communized Rabbis." However they "failed to bring about a split among the believers"

(225) and the vast majority of religious Jews was decisively against the 'Living Synagogue', bringing the plan of Soviet authorities to naught (226).

At the end of 1930 a group of rabbis from Minsk was arrested. They were freed after two weeks and made to sign a document prepared by the GPU agreeing that: (1) the Jewish religion was not persecuted in the USSR and, (2) during the entire Soviet era not one rabbi had been shot (227).

Authorities tried to declare the day of rest to be Sunday or Monday in Jewish areas. School studies were held on the Sabbath by order of the YevSek. In 1929 authorities tried the five-day work week and the six-day work week with the day of rest upon the 5th or 6th day, respectively. Christians lost Sunday and Jews lost the Sabbath. Members of the YevSek rampaged in front of synagogues on holidays and "in Odessa broke into the Brodsky Synagogue and demonstratively ate bread in front of those fasting and praying." They instituted "community service" days during sacred holidays like Yom Kippur. "during holidays, especially when the synagogue was closed, they requisitioned Talles, Torah scrolls, prayer shawls and religious books… import of matzoh from abroad was sometimes allowed and sometimes forbidden (228)… in 1929 they started taxing matzoh preparation (229). Larin notes the "amazing permission" granted to bring matzoh from Königsberg to Moscow for Passover in 1929 (230).

In the 20's private presses still published Jewish religious literature. "In Leningrad, Hasids managed to print prayer books in several runs, a few thousands copies each" while Katzenelson, a rabbi from Leningrad, was able to use the printing-house "Red Agitator." During 1920's, the Jewish calendars were printed and distributed in tens of thousand copies (231). The Jewish community was the only religious group in Moscow allowed to build religious buildings. A second synagogue was built on Visheslaviz alley nearby Sushchevsky Embankment and a third in Cherkizov. These three synagogues stayed open throughout the 30's (232).

But "young Jewish writers and poets… gleefully wrote about the empty synagogues, the lonely rabbi who had no one to teach and about the boys from the villages who grew up to become the terrible red commissars" (233). And we saw the Russian members of Komsomol rampaging on Easter Sunday, knocking candles and holy bread out of worshippers' hands, tearing the crosses from the cupolas and we saw thousands of beautiful churches broken into a rubble of bricks and we remember the thousands of priests that were shot and the thousands of others who were sent to the camps.

In those years, we all drove God out.

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From the early Soviet years the path for Jewish intelligentsia and youth was open as wide as possible in science and culture, given Soviet restrictions. (Olga Kameneva, Trotsky's sister, patronized high culture in the very early Soviet years.)

Already in 1919 "a large number of Jewish youth" went into moviemaking — an art praised by Lenin for its ability to govern the psychology of the masses. Many of them took charge of movie studios, film schools and film crews. For example, B. Shumyatsky, one of the founders of the Mongolian Republic, and S. Dukelsky were heads of the main department of the movie industry at different times (234). Impressive works of early Soviet motion cinematography were certainly a Jewish contribution. The Jewish Encyclopedia lists numerous administrators, producers, directors, actors, script writers and motion picture theorists. Producer Dziga Vertov is considered a classic figure in Soviet, cinema, mostly nonfiction. His works includeLenin's Truth, Go Soviets, Symphony of Donbass [the Donetsk Basin], and The Three Songs about Lenin (235). (It is less known that he also orchestrated desecration of the holy relics of St. Sergius of Radonezh.) In the documentary genre, Esther Shub, "by tendentious cutting and editing of fragments of old documentaries, produced full-length propaganda movies (The Fall of Romanovs (1927) and others), and later — glorifying ones." Other famous Soviet names include S. Yutkevitch, G. Kozintsev and L. Trauberg (SVD, New Babel). F. Ermler organized the Experimental Movie Studio. Among notable others are G. Roshal (The Skotinins), Y. Raizman (Hard Labor Camps, Craving of Earth among others.). By far, the largest figure of Soviet cinematography was Sergei Eisenstein. He introduced "the epic spirit and grandeur of huge crowd scenes, tempo, new techniques of editing and emotionality" into the art of cinematography (236). However he used his gifts as ordered. The worldwide fame of Battleship Potemkin was a battering ram for the purposes of the Soviets and in its irresponsibly falsified history encouraged the Soviet public to further curse Tsarist Russia. Made-up events, such as the "massacre on Odessa Steps" scene and the scene where a crowd of rebellious seamen is covered with tarpaulin for execution, entered the world's consciousness as if they were facts. First it was necessary to serve Stalin's totalitarian plans and then his nationalistic idea. Eisenstein was there to help.

Though the Jewish Encyclopedia list names in the arts by nationality, I must repeat: not in the nationalism does one find the main key to the epoch of the early Soviet years, but in the destructive whirlwind of internationalism, estranged from any feeling of nationality or traditions. And here in theater but close to authorities we see the glorious figure of Meyerhold, who became the leading and most authoritarian star of the Soviet theater. He had numerous impassioned admirers but wasn't universally recognized. From late recollections of Tyrkova-Vyazemskaya, Meyerhold appears as a dictator subjugating both actors and playwrites alike to his will "by his dogmatism and dry formalism." Komissarzhevskaya sensed "that his novelty lacks creative simplicity and ethical and esthetical clarity." He "clipped actor's wings… paid more attention to frame than to portrait" (237). He was a steady adversary of Mikhail Bulgakov.

Of course, the time was such that artists had to pay for their privileges. Many paid, including Kachalov, Nemirovitch-Danchenko and A. Tairov-Kornblit, the talented producer of the Chamber Theater and a star of that unique early Soviet period. (In 1930, Tairov "denounced" 'Prompartia' in the party newspapers.)

Artist Marc Chagall emigrated by 1923. The majority of artists in the 20's were required to contribute to Soviet mass propaganda. There some Jewish artists distinguished themselves, beginning with A. Lisitsky who greeted the revolution as "a new beginning for humanity." He joined a number of various committees and commissions, made first banner of all-Russian Central Executive Committee, which was displayed on the Red Square in 1918 by members of government." He made famous poster "Strike Whites with the Red Wedge," designed numerous Soviet expositions abroad (from 1927) and propaganda albums for the West ("USSR Builds Socialism" etc.) (238). A favorite with the authorities was Isaac Brodsky who drew portraits of Lenin, Trotsky and others including Voroshilov, Frunze and Budenny. "After completing his portrait of Stalin he became the leading official portrait artist of the USSR" in 1928 and in 1934 was named director of the all-Russian Academy of Arts (239).

During early years after revolution, Jewish musical life was particularly rich. At the start of century the first in the world Jewish national school of music in the entire world, which combined both traditional Jewish and contemporary European approaches, was established. The 1920's saw a number of works inspired by traditional Jewish themes and stories, such asYouth of Abraham by M. Gnesin, The Song of Songs by A, Krein, and Jewish Rhapsody by his brother G. Krein. In that age of restrictions, the latter and his son Yulian were sent into eight-years studying trip to Vienna and Paris to "perfect Yulian's performance" (240). Jews were traditionally talented in music and many names of future stars were for the first time heard during that period. Many "administrators from music" appeared also, such as Matias Sokolsky-Greenberg, who was "chief inspector of music at Department of Arts of Ministry of Education" and a senior editor of ideological Music and Revolution."Later in 1930's Moses Greenberg, "a prominent organizer of musical performances," was director of State Publishing House in music and chief editor of the Department of Music Broadcasting at the State Radio Studio (241). There was Jewish Conservatory in Odessa as well (242).

Leonid Utesov (Lazar Vaysbeyn) thundered from the stage. Many of his songs were written by A. d'Aktil. A. P. German and Y. Hayt wrote the March of Soviet Aviation (243). This was the origin of Soviet mass singing culture.

Year after year, the stream of Soviet culture fell more and more under the hand of the government. A number of various state organizations were created such as the State Academic Council, the monopolistic State Publishing House (which choked off many private publishing firms and even had its own political commissar, certain David Chernomordnikov in 1922-23 (244), and the State Commission for Acquisition of Art Pieces (de facto power over artist livelihood). Political surveillance was established. (The case of A. K. Glazunov, Rector of the Leningrad Conservatory, will be reviewed below).

Of course, Jews were only a part of the forward triumphal march of proletarian culture. In the heady atmosphere of the early Soviet epoch no one noticed the loss of Russian culture and that Soviet culture was driving Russian culture out along with its strangled and might-have-been names.

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A vicious battle for the dominance within the Party was waged between Trotsky and Stalin from 1923 to 1927. Later Zinoviev fought for first place equally confident of his chances. In 1926 Zinoviev and Kamenev, deceived by Stalin, united with Trotsky ("the United Opposition") — that is, three of the most visible Jewish leaders turned out on one side. Not surprisingly, many of the lower rank Trotskyites were Jewish. (Agursky cites A. Chiliga, exiled with Trotskyites in the Urals: "indeed the Trotskyites were young Jewish intellectuals and technicians," particularly from Left Bundists (245).

"The opposition was viewed as principally Jewish" and this greatly alarmed Trotsky. In March of 1924 he complained to Bukharin that among the workers it is openly stated: "The kikes are rebelling!" and he claimed to have received hundreds of letters on the topic. Bukharin dismissed it as trivial. Then "Trotsky tried to bring the question of anti-Semitism to a Politburo session but no one supported him." More than anything, Trotsky feared that Stalin would use popular anti-Semitism against him in their battle for power. And such was partially the case according to Uglanov, then secretary of the Moscow Committee of the CP. "Anti-Semitic cries were heard" during Uglanov's dispersal of a pro-Trotsky demonstration in Moscow November 7, 1927 (246).

Maybe Stalin considered playing the anti-Jewish card against the "United Opposition," but his superior political instinct led him away from that. He understood that Jews were numerous in the party at that time and could be a powerful force against him if his actions were to unite them against him. They were also needed in order to maintain support from the West and would be of further use to him personally. He never parted from his beloved assistant Lev Mekhlis — and from the Civil War at Tsaritsyn, his faithful aid Moses Rukhimovitch.

But as Stalin's personal power grew towards the end of the 20's the number of Jews in the Soviet Apparatus began to fall off. It was no accident that he sent Enukidze to take photographs "among the Jewish delegates" at a "workers and peasants" conference during the height of the struggle for party dominance (247).

Yaroslavsky writes in Pravda: "Incidents of anti-Semitism are the same whether they are used against the opposition or used by the opposition in its fight against the party." They are an "attempt to use any weakness, any fissures in the dictatorship of the proletariat… there is "nothing more stupid or reactionary than to explain the roots of opposition to the dictatorship of the proletariat as related to the nationality of this or that opposition group member" (248). At the same Party Congress, the 25th, where the "united opposition" was

decisively broken, Stalin directed Ordzhonikidze to specifically address the national question in his report to the Central Committee, as if in defense Jews. (Statistics from the report were discussed earlier in this chapter.) "The majority of the apparatus is Russian, so any discussion of Jewish dominance has no basis whatever" (249). At the 26th Party Congress in 1930 Stalin declared "Great Russian chauvinism" to be the "main danger of the national question." Thus, at the end of the 20's Stalin did not carry out his planned purge of the party and government apparatus of Jews, but encouraged their expansion in many fields, places and institutions.

At the 25th Congress in December 1927, the time had come to address the looming "peasant question" — what to do with the presumptuous peasantry which had the temerity to ask for manufactured goods in exchange for their grain. Molotov delivered the main report on this topic and among the debaters were the murderers of the peasantry — Schlikhter and Yakovlev-Epstein (250). A massive war against the peasantry lay ahead and Stalin could not afford to alienate any of his reliable allies and probably thought that in this campaign against a disproportionately Slavic population it would be better to rely on Jews than on Russians. He preserved the Jewish majority in the Gosplan. The commanding heights of collectivization and its theory included, of course, Larin. Lev Kritzman was director of the Agrarian Institute from 1928. As Assistant to the President of the Gosplan in 1931-33 he played a fateful role in the persecution of Kondratev and Chayanov. Yakov Yakovlev-Epstein took charge of People's Commissariat of Agriculture in 1929. (Before that he worked in propaganda field: he was in charge of Head Department of Political Education since 1921, later — in the agitprop division of Central Committee and in charge of press division of Central Committee. His career in agriculture began in 1923 when during the 13th Party Congress he drafted resolutions on agricultural affairs (251). And thus he led the "Great Change," the imposition of collectivization on millions of peasants with its zealous implementers on the ground. A contemporary writer reports: "for the first time ever a significant number of young Jewish communists arrived in rural communities as commanders and lords over life and death. Only during collectivization did the characterization of the Jew as the hated enemy of the peasant take hold — even in those places where Jews had never been seen before" (252).

Of course regardless of the percentage of Jews in the party and Soviet apparatus, it would be a mistake to explain the ferocious anti-peasant plan of communism as due to Jewish participation. A Russian could have been found in the place of Yakovlev-Epstein — that's sufficiently clear from our post-October history.

The cause and consequences of de-Kulakization and collectivization were not only social and economic: The millions of victims of these programs were not a faceless mass, but real people with traditions and culture, cut off from their roots and spiritually killed. In its essence, de-Kulakization was not a socio-economic measure, but a measure taken against a nationality. The strategic blow against the Russian people, who were the main obstacle to the victory of communism, was conceived of by Lenin, but carried out after his death. In those years communism with all its cruelty was directed mostly against Russians. It is

amazing that not everything has perished during those days. Collectivization, more than any other policy of the communists, gives the lie to the conception of Stalin's dictatorship as nationalist, i.e., "Russian."

Regarding Jewish role in collectivization, it is necessary to remember that Jewish communists participated efficiently and diligently. From a third-wave immigrant who grew up in Ukraine. "I remember my father, my mother, aunts, uncles all worked on collectivization with great relish, completing 5-year plans in 4 years and writing novels about life in factories" (253)[Translator's note: a mainstream Soviet literary genre in the 20's].

In 1927 Izvestia declared "there is no Jewish question here. The October revolution gave a categorical answer long ago. All nationalities are equal – that was the answer" (254). However when the dispossessors entering the peasant huts were not just commissars but Jewish commissars the question still glowered in the distance.

"At the end of the 20's" writes S. Ettinger, "in all the hardship of life in the USSR, to many it seemed that Jews were the only group which gained from the revolution. They were found in important government positions, they made up a large proportion of university students, it was rumored that they received the best land in the Crimea and have flooded into Moscow" (255).

Half a century later, June 1980, at a Columbia University conference about the situation of Soviet Jewry, I heard scholars describe the marginalized status of Jews in the USSR and in particular how Jews were offered the choice of either emigration or denying their roots, beliefs and culture in order to become part of a denationalized society.

Bah! That was what was required of all peoples in the 20's under the threat of the Solovki prison camp – and emigration was not an alternative.

The "golden era" of the 20's cries out for a sober appraisal.

Those years were filled with the cruelest persecution based upon class distinction, including persecution of children on account of the former life of their parents – a life which the children did not even see. But Jews were not among thesechildren or parents.

The clergy, part of the Russian character, centuries in the making, was hounded to death in the 20's. Though not majority Jewish, too often the people saw Jews directing the special "ecclesiastical departments of the GPU" which worked in this area.

A wave of trials of engineers took place from the end of the 20's through the 30's. An entire class of older engineers was eliminated. This group was overwhelmingly Russian with a small number of Germans.

Study of Russian history, archeology, and folklore were suppressed — the Russians could not have a past. No one from the persecutors would be accused having their own national

interest. (It must be noted that the commission which prepared the decree abolishing the history and the philology departments at Russian universities was made up Jews and non-Jews alike — Goykhbarg, Larin, Radek and Ropstein as well as Bukharin, M. Pokrovskii, Skvortsov-Stepanov and Fritche. It was signed into existence by Lenin in March, 1921.) The spirit of the decree was itself an example of nationalist hatred: It was the history and language of the Great Russians that was no longer needed. During the 20's the very understanding of Russian history was changed — there was none! And the understanding of what a Great Russian is changed — there was no such thing.

And what was most painful, we Russians ourselves walked along this suicidal path. The very period of the 20's was considered the dawn of liberated culture, liberated from Tsarism and capitalism! Even the word "Russian," such as "I am Russian" sounded like a counter-revolutionary cry which I well remember from my childhood. But without hesitation everywhere was heard and printed "Russopyati"! [Translator's note: a disparaging term for ethnic Russians.]

Pravda published the following in a prominent place in 1925 by V. Aleksandrovsky (not known for any other contribution):

Rus! Have you rotted, fallen and died?

Well… here's to your eternal memory…

… you shuffle, your crutches scraping along,

Your lips smeared with soot from icons,

over your vast expanses the raven caws,

You have guarded your grave dream.

Old woman — blind and stupid… (256)

V. Bloom in Moscow Evening could brazenly demand the removal of "history's garbage from [city] squares": to remove Minin-Pozharsky monument from the Red Square, to remove the monument to Russia's thousand-year anniversary in Novgorod and a statue of St. Vladimir on the hill in Kiev. "Those tons of metal are needed for raw material." (The ethnic coloring of the new names has already been noted.)

Swept to glory by the political changes and distinguished by personal shamelessness, David Zaslavsky demanded the destruction of the studios of Igor Graybar used to restore ancient Russian art, finding that "reverend artist fathers were trying again to fuse the church and art" (257).

Russia's self-mortification reflected in the Russian language with the depth, beauty and richness of meaning were replaced by an iron stamp of Soviet conformity.

We have not forgotten how it looked at the height of the decade: Russian patriotism was abolished forever. But the feelings of the people will not be forgotten. Not how it felt to see the Church of the Redeemer blown up by the engineer Dzhevalkin and that the main mover behind this was Kaganovich who wanted to destroy St. Basil's cathedral as well. Russian Orthodoxy was publicly harassed by "warrior atheists" led by Gubelman-Yaroslavsky. It is truthfully noted: "That Jewish communists took part in the destruction of churches was particularly offensive… No matter how offensive the participation of sons of Russian peasants in the persecution of the church, the part played by each non-Russian was even more offensive" (258). This went against the Russian saying: "if you managed to snatch a room in the house, don't throw the God out".

In the words of A. Voronel, "The 20's were perceived by the Jews as a positive opportunity while for the Russian people, it was a tragedy" (259).

True, the Western leftist intellectuals regarded Soviet reality even higher; their admiration was not based on nationality but upon ideas of socialism. Who remembers the lightening crack of the firing squad executing 48 "food workers" for having "caused the Great Famine" (i.e., rather than Stalin): the wreckers in the meat, fish, conserves and produce trade? Among these unfortunates were not less than ten Jews (260). What would it take to end the world's enchantment with Soviet power? Dora Shturman attentively followed the efforts of B. Brutskus to raise a protest among Western intellectuals. He found some who would protest – Germans and "rightists." Albert Einstein hotheadedly signed a protest, but then withdrew his signature without embarrassment because the "Soviet Union has achieved a great accomplishment" and "Western Europe… will soon envy you." The recent execution by firing squad was an "isolated incident." Also, "from this, one cannot exclude the possibility that they were guilty." Romain Rolland maintained a "noble" silence. Arnold Zweig barely stood up to the communist rampage. At least he didn't withdraw his signature, but said this settling of accounts was an "ancient Russian method." And, if true, what then should be asked of the academic Ioffe in Russia who was prompting Einstein to remove his signature (261)?

No, the West never envied us and from those "isolated incidents" millions of innocents died. We'll never discover why this brutality was forgotten by Western opinion. It's not very readily remembered today.

Today a myth is being built about the past to the effect that under Soviet power Jews were always second class citizens. Or, one sometimes hears that "there was not the persecution in the 20's that was to come later."

It's very rare to hear an admission that not only did they take part, but there was a certain enthusiasm among Jews as they carried out the business of the barbaric young government. "The mixture of ignorance and arrogance which Hannah calls a typical characteristic of the Jewish parvenu filled the government, social and cultural elite. The brazenness and ardor

with which all Bolshevik policies were carried out — whether confiscation of church property or persecution of 'bourgeois intellectuals' gave Bolshevik power in the 20's a certain Jewish stamp" (263).

In the 90's another Jewish public intellectual, writing of the 20's said : "In university halls Jews often set the tone without noticing that their banquet was happening against the backdrop of the demise of the main nationality in the country… During the 20's Jews were proud of fellow Jews who had brilliant careers in the revolution, but did not think much about how that career was connected to the real suffering of the Russian people… Most striking today is the unanimity with which my fellow Jews deny any guilt in the history of 20th century Russia" (264).

How healing it would be for both nations if such lonely voices were not drowned out… because it's true, in the 20's, Jews in many ways served the Bolshevik Moloch not thinking of the broken land and not foreseeing the eventual consequences for themselves. Many leading Soviet Jews lost all sense of moderation during that time, all sense of when it was time to stop.

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Chapter 19: In the 1930s

The 1930s were years of an intense industrialized spurt, which crushed the peasantry and altered the life of the entire country. Mere existence demanded adaptation and development of new skills. But through crippling sacrifices, and despite the many absurdities of the Soviet organizational system, the horrible epic somehow led to the creation of an industrialized power.

Yet the first and second five-year plans came into existence and were carried out not through the miracle of spontaneous generation, nor as a result of the simple violent round-up of large masses of laborers. It demanded many technical provisions, advanced equipment, and the collaboration of specialists experienced in this technology. All this flowed plentifully from the capitalist West, and most of all from the United States; not in the form of a gift, of course, and not in the form of generous help. The Soviet communists paid for all of this abundantly with Russia's mineral wealth and timber, with concessions for raw materials markets, with trade areas promised to the West, and with plundered goods from the Empire of the tsars. Such deals flowed with the help and approval of international financial magnates, most of all those on Wall Street, in a persistent continuation of the first commercial ties that the Soviet communists developed on the American stock exchanges as early as during the Civil War. The new partnership was strengthened by shiploads of tsarist gold and treasures from the Hermitage.

But wait a second, were we not thoroughly taught by Marx that capitalists are the fierce enemies of proletarian socialism and that we should not expect help from them, but rather a destructive, bloody war? Well, it's not that simple: despite the official diplomatic non-recognition, trade links were completely out in the open, and even written about in Izvestiya: "American merchants are interested in broadening of economic ties with the Soviet Union."[1] American unions came out against such an expansion (defending their markets from the products of cheap and even slave Soviet labor). The "Russian-American Chamber of Commerce," created at that time, simply did not want to hear about any political opposition to communism, or "to mix politics with business relations."[2]

Anthony Sutton, a modern American scholar, researched the recently-opened diplomatic and financial archives and followed the connections of Wall Street with the Bolsheviks; he pointed to the amoral logic of this long and consistent relationship. From as early as the "Marburg" plan at the beginning of the 20th century, which was based on the vast capital of Carnegie, the idea was to strengthen the authority of international finance, through global "socialization," "for control … and for the forced appeasement." Sutton concluded that: "International financiers prefer to do business with central governments. The banking community least of all wants a free economy and de-centralized authority." "Revolution and international finance do not quite contradict each other, if the result of revolution should be to establish a more centralized authority," and, therefore, to make the markets of these

countries manageable. And there was a second line of agreement: “Bolsheviks and bankers shared an essential common platform — internationalism.”[3]

In that light, the subsequent support of “collective enterprises and the mass destruction of individual rights by Morgan-Rockefeller” was not surprising. In justification of this support, they claimed in Senate hearings: “Why should a great industrial country, like America, desire the creation and subsequent competition of another great industrial rival?”[4] Well, they rightly believed that with such an obviously uncompetitive, centralized and totalitarian regime, Soviet Russia could not rival America. Another thing is that Wall Street could not predict further development of the Bolshevik system, nor its extraordinary ability to control people, working them to the very bone, which eventually led to the creation of a powerful, if misshapen, industry.

But how does this tie in with our basic theme? Because as we have seen, American financiers completely refused loans to pre-revolutionary Russia due to the infringement of the rights of Jews there, even though Russia was always a profitable financial prospect. And clearly, if they were prepared to sacrifice profits at that time, then now, despite all their counting on the Soviet markets, the “Morgan-Rockefeller Empire” would not assist the Bolsheviks if the persecution of the Jews was looming on horizon in the USSR at the start of the 1930s.

That’s just the point: for the West, the previously described Soviet oppression of the traditional Jewish culture and of Zionists easily disappeared under the contemporary general impression that the Soviet power would not oppress the Jews, but on the contrary, that many of them would remain at the levers of power.

Certain pictures of the past have the ability to conveniently rearrange in our mind in order to soothe our consciousness. And today a perception has formed that in the 1930s the Jews were already forced out of the Soviet ruling elite and had nothing to do with the administration of the country. In the 1980s we see assertions like this: in the Soviet times, the Jews in the USSR were “practically destroyed as a people; they had been turned into a social group, which was settled in the large cities “as a social stratum to serve the ruling class.”[5]

No. Not only far from “serving”, the Jews were to the large extent members of the “ruling class.” And the “large cities,” the capitals of the constituent Soviet republics, were the very thing the authorities bought off through improved provisioning, furnishing and maintenance, while the rest of the country languished from oppression and poverty. And now, after the shock of the Civil War, after the War Communism, after the NEP and the first five-year plan, it was the peace-time life of the country that was increasingly managed by the government apparatus, in which the role of the Jews was quite conspicuous, at least until 1937-38.

In 1936, at the 8th Congress of Soviets of the Soviet Union, Molotov, on orders from Stalin (perhaps to differ from Hitler in the eyes of the West) delivered this tirade: “Our brotherly feelings toward the Jewish people are determined by the fact that they begat the genius and

the creator of the ideas of the communist liberation of Mankind," Karl Marx; "that the Jewish people, alongside the most developed nations, brought forth countless prominent scientists, engineers, and artists [that undoubtedly had already manifested itself in the Soviet 1930s, and will be even more manifest in the post-war years], and gave many glorious heroes to the revolutionary struggle … and in our country they gave and are still giving new, remarkable, and talented leaders and managers in all areas of development and defense of the Cause of Socialism."[6]

The italics are mine. No doubt, it was said for propaganda purposes. But Molotov's declaration was appropriate. And the "defense of the Cause of Socialism" during all those years was in the hands of the GPU, the army, diplomacy, and the ideological front. The willing participation of so many Jews in these organs continued in the early and mid-1930s, until 1937-38.

Here we will briefly review – according to contemporary newspapers, later publications, and modern Jewish encyclopedias – the most important posts and names that had emerged mainly in the 1930s. Of course, such a review, complicated by the fact that we know nothing about how our characters identified themselves in regard to nationality, may contain mistakes in individual cases and can in no way be considered comprehensive.

After the destruction of the "Trotskyite opposition," the Jewish representation in the party apparatus became noticeably reduced. But that purge of the supreme party apparatus was absolutely not anti-Jewish. Lazar Kaganovich retained his extremely prominent position in the Politburo; he was an ominously merciless individual and, at the same time, a man of notoriously low proffessional level. (Nevertheless, from the mid-1930s he was the Secretary of the Central Committee, and simultaneously a member of the Organizational Bureau of the Central Committee — only Stalin himself held both these positions at the same time). And he placed three of his brothers in quite important posts. Mikhail Kaganovich was deputy chair of the Supreme Soviet of the National Economy beginning in 1931; from 1937 he was narkom (narodny komissar, that is, "people's commissar") of the defense industry; later he simultaneously headed the aviation industry. Yuli Kaganovich, passing through the leading party posts in Nizhniy Novgorod (as all the brothers did), became deputy narkom of the foreign trade.[7] (Another, absolutely untalented brother, was a "big gun" in Rostov-on-Don. It reminds me of a story by Saltykov-Shchedrin, where one Vooz Oshmyanskiy tried to place his brother Lazar in a profitable post). However, both the ethnic Russian opposition factions, that of Rykov, Bukharin and Tomsky, and that of Syrtsov, Ryutin, and Uglanov, were destroyed by Stalin in the beginning of the 1930s with support of the Jewish Bolsheviks — he drew necessary replacements from their ranks. Kaganovich was the principal and the most reliable of Stalin's supporters in the Politburo: he demanded the execution of Ryutin (October 1932-January 1933) but even Stalin wasn't able to manage it then.[8] The purge of 1930-1933 dealt with the Russian elements in the party.

Out of 25 members in the Presidium of the Central Control Commission after the 16th Party Congress (1930), 10 were Jews: A. Solts, "the conscience of the Party" (in the bloodiest years from 1934 to 1938 was assistant to Vyshinsky, the General Prosecutor of the USSR [9]); Z. Belenky (one of the three above-mentioned Belenky brothers); A. Goltsman (who supported Trotsky in the debate on trade unions); ferocious Rozaliya Zemlyachka (Zalkind); M. Kaganovich, another of the brothers; the Chekist Trilisser; the "militant atheist" Yaroslavsky; B. Roizenman; and A.P. Rozengolts, the surviving assistant of Trotsky. If one compares the composition of the party's Central Committee in the 1920s with that in the early 1930s, he would find that it was almost unchanged — both in 1925 as well as after the 16th Party Congress, Jews comprised around 1/6 of the membership.[10]

In the upper echelons of the communist party after the 17th Congress ("the congress of the victors") in 1934, Jews remained at 1/6 of the membership of the Central Committee; in the Party Control Commission — around 1/3, and a similar proportion in the Revision Commission of the Central Committee. (It was headed for quite a while by M. Vladimirsky. From 1934 Lazar Kaganovich took the reins of the Central Control Commission). Jews made up the same proportion (1/3) of the members of the Commission of the Soviet Control.[11] For five years filled with upheaval (1934-1939) the deputy General Prosecutor of the USSR was Grigory Leplevsky.[12]

Occupants of many crucial party posts were not even announced in Pravda. For instance, in autumn 1936 the Secretary of the Central Committee of Komsomol (the Union of Communist Youth) was E. Fainberg.[13] The Department of the Press and Publishing of the Central Committee – the key ideological establishment – was managed by B. Tal. Previously, the department was headed by Lev Mekhlis, who had by then shifted to managing Pravda full-time; from 1937 Mekhlis became deputy narkom of defense and the head of Political Administration of the Red Army.

We see many Jews in the command posts in provinces: in the Central Asia Bureau, the Eastern Siberia Krai Party Committee (kraikom), in the posts of first secretaries of the obkoms [party committee of oblasts] of the Volga German Republic, the Tatar, Bashkir, Tomsk, Kalinin, and Voronezh oblasts and in many others. For example, Mendel Khatayevich (a member of the Central Committee from 1930) was consequently secretary of Gomel, Odessa, Tatar, and Dnepropetrovsk obkoms, secretary of the Middle Volga kraikom, and second secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine. Yakov Chubin was secretary of the Chernigov and Akmolinsk obkoms and of the Shakhtinsk district party committee; later he served in several commissions of the Party Control in Moscow, Crimea, Kursk, and Turkmenia, and from 1937 he was the first secretary of the Central Committee of Turkmenia.[14] There is no need to list all such names, but let's not overlook the real contribution of these secretaries into the Bolshevik cause; also note their striking geographical mobility, as in the 1920s. Reliable cadres were still in much demand and

indispensable. And there was no concern that they lacked knowledge of each new locality of which they took charge.

Yet much more power was in the hands of the narkoms. In 1936 we see nine Jewish narkoms in the Government. Take the worldwide-famous narkom of foreign affairs Litvinov (in the friendly cartoons in Izvestiya, he was portrayed as a knight of peace with a spear and shield taking a stand against foreign filth); no less remarkable, but only within the limits of the USSR, was the narkom of internal affairs Yagoda; the ascending and all-glorious "Iron Narkom" of railroads, Lazar Kaganovich; foreign trade was headed by A. Rozengolts(before that we saw him in the Central Control Commission); I.Ya. Weitser was in charge of domestic trade; M. Kalmanovich was in charge of sovkhozes [state owned farms that paid wages] (he was the foods-commissar from the end of 1917); I.E. Lyubimov was narkom of light industry; G. Kaminskiy was narkom of healthcare, his instructive articles were often published in Izvestiya; and the above-mentioned Z. Belenky was the head of the Commission of the Soviet Control.[15] In the same Government we can find many Jewish names among the deputy narkoms in various people's commissariats: finance, communications, railroad transport, water, agriculture, the timber industry, the foodstuffs industry, education, justice. Among the most important deputy narkoms were: Ya. Gamarnik (defense), A. Gurevich ("he made a significant contribution to the creation of the metallurgical industry in the country"[16]); Semyon Ginzburg, he was deputy narkom of heavy industry, and later he became narkom of construction, and even later minister of construction of military enterprises.[17]

The famous "Great Turning Point" took place place from the end of 1929 to the beginning of 1931. Murderous collectivization lay ahead, and at this decisive moment Stalin assigned Yakovlev-Epshtein as its sinister principal executive. His portraits and photos, and drawings by I. Brodsky, were prominently reproduced in newspapers then and later, from year to year.[18] Together with the already mentioned M. Kalmanovich, he was a member of the very top Soviet of Labor and Defense (there was hardly anyone apart from Stalin, Molotov, Mikoyan, Ordzhonikidze, Voroshilov in that organ).[19] In March of 1931, at the 6th Session of Soviets, Yakovlev reported on the progress of collectivization – about the development of sovkhozes and kolkhozes (that is, the destruction of the way of life of the people).[20] On this 'glorious' path to the ruination of Russia, among Yakovlev's collaborators, we can see deputy narkom V.G. Feigin, members of the Board of the people's commissariat of agriculture M.M. Volf, G.G. Roshal, and other 'experts'. The important organization, the Grain Trust, was attached to the people's commissariat of agriculture to pump out grain from peasants for the state; the chairman of the board of directors was M.G. Gerchikov, his portraits appeared in Izvestiya, and Stalin himself sent him a telegram of encouragement.[21] From 1932 the People's Commissariat of Sovkhozes and Kolkhozes with M. Kalmanovich at the helm was separated from the people's commissariat of agriculture.[22] From 1934 the chairman of the national Soviet of Kolkhozes was the same Yakovlev-Epshtein.[23] The chairman of the Commission of Purveyance was I. Kleiner (who was awarded the Order of Lenin). During the most terrible months of collectivization, M.

Kalmanovich was deputy narkom of agriculture. But at the end of 1930 he was transferred into the People's Commissariat of Finance as deputy narkom; he also became chairman of the board of the Gosbank [The State Bank], for in monetary matters a strong will was also much needed. In 1936, Lev Maryasin became chairman of the board of the Gosbank; he was replaced in that post by Solomon Krutikov in 1936.[24]

In November 1930 the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade was created, and A.P. Rozengolts served for seven years as its head. Jews comprised one-third of its board members. Among them was Sh. Dvoylatsky, who simultaneously served in the Central Commissions on Concessions; in 1934-1936 he became the Soviet trade representative in France.[25] At the end of 1930 the People's Commissariat of Supply was created with A. Mikoyan at the helm; on its board we see M. Belenky — that is another, actually the fifth, man with the surname "Belenky" encountered here; soon he himself became the narkom, replacing Mikoyan. In general, in the People's Commisariats of Trade and Supply, the Jewish component was higher than in the upper party echelons — from a quarter to a half. Still let's not overlook the Tsentrosoyuz (the bureaucratic center of Soviet pseudo-cooperation). After Lev Khichuk in the 1920s, it was managed from 1931 to 1937 by I.A. Zelensky, whom we met earlier as a member of the board of the people's commissariat of foodstuffs.[26]

Let me point it out once more: all these examples are for illustrative purposes only. They should not be taken to create the impression that there were no members of other nationalities on all those boards and in the presidiums; of course there were. Moreover, all the above-mentioned people occupied their posts only for a while; they were routinely transferred between various important positions.

Let's look at transport and communications. First, railroads were managed by M. Rukhimovich (his portraits could be found in the major newspapers of the time[27]); later he became narkom of defense industry (with M. Kaganovich as his deputy), while the command over railroads was given to L. Kaganovich.[28] There were important changes in the Coal Trust: I. Schwartz was removed from the board and M. Deych was assigned to replace him.[29] T. Rozenoer managed Grozneft [Grozny Oil]. Yakov Gugel headed the construction of the Magnitogorsk metallurgical giant; Yakov Vesnik was the director of the Krivoy Rog Metallurgical industrial complex; and the hell of the Kuznetsk industrial complex with its 200,000 hungry and ragged workers was supervised by S. Frankfurt, and after him by I. Epshtein (the latter was arrested in 1938 but landed on his feet because he was sent to take command over the construction of the Norilsk industrial complex).[30]

The Supreme Soviet of the National Economy still existed, but its significance waned. After Unshlikht, it was headed by A. Rozengolts, and then by Ordzhonikidze, with Jews comprising the majority of its board.[31]

At that time, the Gosplan [state planning ministry] gathered strength. In 1931, under the chairmanship of Kuibyshev, Jews comprised more than half of its 18-member board.[32]

Let's now examine the top posts in economy during the "last burgeoning year" of Stalin's era, 1936. In 1936 Izvestiya published[33] the complete roster of the board of the people's commissariat of domestic trade. Those 135 individuals had essentially ruled over the entire domestic trade in the USSR (and they were hardly disinterested men). Jews comprised almost 40% of this list, including two deputies to the narkom, several trade inspectors, numerous heads of food and manufactured goods trades in the oblasts, heads of consumer unions, restaurant trusts, cafeterias, food supplies and storage, heads of train dining cars and railroad buffets; and of course, the head of Gastronom No.1 in Moscow ("Eliseyevsky") was also a Jew. Naturally, all this facilitated smooth running of the industry in those far from prosperous years.

In the pages of Izvestiya one could read headlines like this: "The management of the Union's Fishing Trust made major political mistakes." As a result, Moisei Frumkin was relieved of his post at the board of the People's Commissariat of Ddomestic Trade (we saw him in the 1920s as a deputy of the Narkom of Foreign Trade). Comrade Frumkin was punished with a stern reprimand and a warning; comrade Kleiman suffered the same punishment; and comrade Nepryakhin was expelled from the party.[34]

Soon after that, Izvestiya published[35] an addendum to the roster of the People's Commissariat of Heavy Industry with 215 names in it. Those wishing to can delve into it as well. A present-day author thus writes about those people: by the 1930s "the children of the déclassé Jewish petty bourgeois succeeded … in becoming the 'commanders' of the "great construction projects." And so it appeared to those who, putting in 16 hours a day for weeks and months, never leaving the foundation pits, the swamps, the deserts, and taiga …, that it was "their country."[36] However, the author is wrong: it was the blackened hard-workers and yesterday's peasants, who had no respite from toiling in foundation pits and swamps, while the directors only occasionally promenaded there; they mainly spent time in offices enjoying their special provision services ("the bronze foremen"). But undoubtedly, their harsh and strong-willed decisions helped to bring these construction projects to completion, building up the industrial potential of the USSR.

Thus the Soviet Jews obtained a weighty share of state, industrial, and economic power at all levels of government in the USSR.

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The personality of B. Roizenman merits particular attention. See for yourself: he received the Order of Lenin "in recognition of his exceptional services" in the adjustment of the state apparatus "to the objectives of the large-scale offensive for Socialism." What secrets, inscrutable to us, could be hidden behind this "offensive"? We can glance into some of them from the more direct wording: for carrying out "special missions of top state importance on the clean-up of state apparatus in the Soviet diplomatic missions abroad."[37]

Now let's look at the state of affairs in diplomacy. The 1920s were examined in the preceding chapter. Now we encounter other important people. For example, in spring of 1930, Izvestiya reported on page 1 and under a separate heading that "F.A. Rotshtein, the board member of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, returned from vacation and resumed his duties."[38] (Well, didn't they only write this way about Stalin? To the best of my knowledge, neither Ordzhonikidze, nor Mikoyan – other very top functionaries – was honored in such a way?) Yet very soon Rotshtein made a slip and his career ended just two months later, in July 1930. With the designation of Litvinov as narkom, Rotshtein was removed from the board (even though, we may remember, he claimed credit for the creation of the British Communist Party). In the 1930s, at the peak of Litvinov's power, a new generation appeared. The Jewish Encyclopedia writes: "there was a notion of 'the Litvinov school of diplomacy'" that included the outstanding personalities of K. Umansky, Ya. Surits, B. Shtein (he was already successful by the beginning of the 1920s) and E. Gnedin (son of Parvus).[39] Ehrenburg added here the name of E. Rubinin. Just as in the 1920s diplomacy attracted a cadre of Jews, so it did through the early and mid-1930s. From the moment the USSR was accepted into the League of Nations, we see Litvinov, Shtein, Gnedin, and also Brenner, Stashevsky, Marcus, Rozenberg, and Svanidze (a Georgian) as the senior members of the Soviet delegation. It was these people who represented Soviet Russia at that forum of nations. There were Soviet plenipotentiaries in Europe of Jewish origin: in England — Maisky; in Germany (and later in France)—Ya. Surits; in Italy—B. Shtein (after Kamenev); we also see Jewish plenipotentiaries in Spain, Austria, Romania, Greece, Lithuania, Latvia, Belgium, Norway, and in Asia. For example, the above-mentioned Surits represented the Soviet Union in Afghanistan as early as the Russian Civil War; later, from 1936, B. Skvirsky served in Afghanistan; for many years he was was the unofficial Soviet representative in Washington.[40] In the early and mid-1930s, a great number of Jews successfully continued to work in Soviet trade delegations. (Here we find another Belenky, already the sixth individual of that name, B.S.Belenky, who was the trade representative in Italy from 1934 to 1937).[41]

Concerning the Red Army, the aforementioned Israeli researcher, Aron Abramovich, writes that in the 1930s "a significant number of Jewish officers served" in the army. "There were many of them, in particular in the Revolutionary Military Soviet, in the central administrations of the people's commissariat of defense, in the general staff, and at lower levels – in the military districts, in the armies, corps, divisions, brigades, and all military units. The Jews still played a prominent role in the political organs."[42] The entire Central Political Administration of the Red Army came under command of the trustworthy Mekhlis after the suicide of the trustworthy Gamarnik. Here are several names from the cream of the Political Administration: Mordukh Khorosh was the deputy director of the Political Administration of the Red Army in the 1930s, and later, until his arrest, he was in charge of the Political Administration of the Kiev military district. From 1929 through to 1937, Lazar Aronshtam headed the political administration of the Belorussian military district, then of the Special Far Eastern Army, and later – of the Moscow military district. Isaak Grinberg was the Senior

Inspector of the Political Administration of the Red Army, and later the deputy director of the Political Administration of the Leningrad district. Boris Ippo (he participated in the pacification of Central Asia during the Civil War as the head of the Political Administration of the Turkestan Front and later of the Central-Asian district) was the head of the political administration of the Caucasus Red Army; and later the director of the Military Political Academy. The already-mentioned Mikhail Landa from 1930 to 1937 was the chief editor of Krasnaya Zvezda (The Red Star, the official newspaper of the Soviet military).Naum Rozovsky was a military prosecutor since the Civil War; by 1936 he was the chief military prosecutor of the Red Army.[43]

Gamarnik remained the deputy to Voroshilov, the chairman of the Revolutionary Military Soviet until 1934 (when the organization was disbanded). In the 1930s, in addition to those named in the previous chapter, among the heads of the central administrations of the Red Army, we encounter the following individuals: Abram Volp (the head of the Administrative Mobilization Administration; in the previous chapter he was identified as the chief of staff of the Moscow military district), Semyon Uritsky (of the Military Intelligence Administration, until 1937), Boris Feldman – the head of the Central Personnel Administration, and Leontiy Kotlyar — the head of the Central Military Engineering Administration in the pre-war years. Among the commanders of the branches of the military we find A. Goltsman, the head of military aviation from 1932 (we already saw him in the Central Control Commission, and as a union activist; he died in a plane crash). Among the commanders of the military districts we again see Iona Yakir (Crimean district, and later the important Kiev District), and Lev Gordon (Turkestan district).[44] Although we have no data on Jewish representation in the lower ranks, there is little doubt that when a structure (be it a political administration of the army, a supply service, or a party or a commissariat apparatus) was headed by a Jew, it was accompanied, as a rule, by a quite noticeable Jewish presence among its staff.

Yet service in the army is not a vice; it can be quite constructive. So what about our good old GPU-NKVD? A modern researcher, relying on archives, writes: “The first half of the 1930s was characterized by the increasingly important role of Jews in the state security apparatus.” And “on the eve of the most massive repressions … the ethnic composition of the supreme command of the NKVD … [can be understood with the help of] the list of decorated Chekists on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Cheka-OGPU-NKVD. The list of 407 senior officials published in the central press contained 56 Jews (13.8%), and 7 Latvians (1.7%).”[45]

When the GPU was reformed into the NKVD (1934) with Yagoda at the head, they twice published the names of the supreme commissars of the NKVD (what a rare chance to peek behind a usually impenetrable wall[46]!): commissars of State Security of the 1st Rank Ya.S. Agranov (the first deputy to Yagoda), V.A. Balitsky, T.D. Deribas, G.E. Prokovev, S.F. Redens, L.M. Zakovsky; of the 2nd Rank: L.N. Belskiy, K.V. Pauker (they were already decorated in 1927 on the decennial of the Cheka), M.I. Gay, S.A. Goglidze, L.B. Zalin, Z.B. Katsnelson, K.M. Karlson, I.M. Leplevsky, G.A. Molchanov, L.G. Mironov, A.A. Slutsky, A.M. Shanin, and R.A.

Pillyar. Of course, not all of them were Jews but a good half were. So, the Jewish Chekists were still there; they didn't leave, nor were they forced out of the NKVD, the same NKVD which was devouring the country after the death of Kirov, and which later devoured itself.

A.A. Slutsky was the director of the NKVD's foreign section; that is, he was in charge of espionage abroad. "His deputies were Boris Berman and Sergey Shpigelglas." Pauker was a barber from Budapest, who connected with the communists while he was a Russian POW in 1916. Initially, he was in charge of the Kremlin security and later became the head of the operations section of the NKVD.[47] Of course, due to secrecy and the non-approachability of these highly placed individuals, it is difficult to judge them conclusively. Take, for instance, Naum (Leonid) Etingon, who orchestrated the murder of Trotsky and was the organizer of the "Cambridge Five" espionage ring and who oversaw the nuclear espionage after the war — a true ace of espionage.[48]

Or take Lev Feldbin (he used a catchy pseudonym of 'Aleksandr Orlov'). A prominent and long-serving Chekist, he headed the economic section of the foreign department of GPU, that is, he supervised all foreign trade of the USSR. He was a trusted agent, of those who were instructed in the shroud of full secrecy on how "to extract false confessions [from the victims]." "Many [of the NKVD investigators] ended up being subordinate to him."[49] And yet he was completely hidden from the public and became famous only later, when he defected to the West. And how many such posts were there?

Or take Mikhail Koltsov-Fridlyand ("the political advisor" to the Republican government of Spain)[50], who took part in some of the major GPU adventures.

M. Berman was assigned as deputy to the Narkom of Internal Affairs Ezhov within three days after the latter was installed on September 27, 1936. Still, Berman remained the director of the GULag.[51] And along with Ezhov, came his handymen. Mikhail Litvin, his long-time associate in the Central Committee of the party, became the director of the personnel department of the NKVD; by May 1937 he rose to the unmatched rank of director of the Secret Political section of the Main Directorate of State Security of the NKVD. In 1931-36, Henrikh Lyushkov was the deputy director of that section; he deserted to Japan in 1938 and was then killed by a Japanese bullet in 1945 – by the end of the war the Japanese did not want to give him back and had no option but shoot him. In this way, we can extensively describe the careers of each of them. In the same section, Aleksandr Radzivilovsky was an "agent for special missions." Another long-time Ezhov colleague, Isaak Shapiro, was Ezhov's personal assistant from 1934, and then he became the director of the NKVD Secretariat, and later was the director of the infamous Special Section of the Main Directorate of State Security of the NKVD.[52]

In December 1936, among the heads of ten sections (for secrecy, designated only by number) of the Main Directorate of State Security of the NKVD, we see seven Jews: the Security section (section #1)—K. Pauker; Counter-Intelligence (3) — L. Mironov; Special

section (5)—I. Leplevsky; Transport (6)—A. Shanin; Foreign section (7) — A. Slutsky; Records and Registration (8)—V. Tsesarsky; Prisons (10)—Ya. Veinshtok. Over the course of the meat-grinding year of 1937 several other Jews occupied posts of directors of those sections: A. Zalpeter—Operations section (2); Ya. Agranov, followed by M. Litvin—Secret Political section (4); A Minaev-Tsikanovsky—Counter-Intelligence (3); and I. Shapiro – Special section (9).[53]

I named the leadership of the GULag in my book, GULag Archipelago. Yes, there was a large proportion of Jews among its command. (Portraits of the directors of construction of the White Sea-Baltic Canal, which I reproduced from the Soviet commemorative corpus of 1936, caused outrage: they claimed that I have selected the Jews only on purpose. But I did not select them, I've just reproduced the photographs of all the High Directors of the BelBaltlag [White Sea - Baltic Canal camp administration] from that immortal book. Am I guilty that they had turned out to be Jews? Who had selected them for those posts? Who is guilty?) I will now add information about three prominent men, whom I did not know then. Before the BelBaltlag, one Lazar Kogan worked as the head of the GULag; Zinovy Katsnelson was the deputy head of the GULag from 1934 onward; Izrail Pliner was the head of the GULag from 1936, and later he oversaw the completion of construction of the Moscow-Volga Canal (1937).[54]

It can't be denied that History elevated many Soviet Jews into the ranks of the arbiters of the fate of all Russians.

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Never publicized information about events of different times flows from different sources: about the regional Plenipotentiaries of GPU-NKVD in the 1930s (before 1937). The names of their offices fully deserved to be written in capital letters, for it was precisely them and not the secretaries of the obkoms, who were the supreme masters of their oblasts, masters of the life and death of any inhabitant, who reported directly only to the central NKVD in Moscow. The full names of some of them are known, while only initials remain from others; and still of others, we know only their last names. They moved from post to post, between different provinces. (If we could only find the dates and details of their service! Alas, all this was done in secret). And in all of the 1930s, many Jews remained among those provincial lords. According to the recently published data, in the regional organs of State Security, not counting the Main Directorate of State Security, there were 1,776 Jews (7.4% of the total members serving).[55]

A few Jewish plenipotentiaries are listed here: in Belorussia – Izrail Leplevsky (brother of the deputy General Prosecutor Grigory Leplevsky, we already saw him in the Cheka; later, he worked in a senior post in the GPU as a Commissar of State Security of 2nd Rank; and now we see him as the Narkom of Internal Affairs of Belorussia from 1934 to 1936); in the Western Oblast – I.M. Blat, he later worked in Chelyabinsk; in the Ukraine – Z. Katsnelson, we saw him in the Civil War all around the country, from the Caspian Sea to the White Sea.

Now he was the deputy head of the GULag; later we see him as Deputy Narkom of Internal Affairs of Ukraine; in 1937 he was replaced by Leplevsky. We see D.M. Sokolinsky first In Donetsk Oblast and later in Vinnitsa Oblast; L.Ya. Faivilovich and Fridberg – in the Northern Caucasus; M.G. Raev-Kaminsky and Purnis – in Azerbaijan; G. Rappoport – in Stalingrad Oblast; P.Sh. Simanovsky – in Orlov Oblast; Livshits – in Tambov Oblast; G.Ya. Abrampolsky – in Gorkov Oblast; A.S. Shiyron, supervising the round-up of the dispossessed kulaks – in Arkhangel Oblast; I.Z. Ressin – in the German Volga Republic; Zelikman – in Bashkiriya; N. Raysky – in Orenburg Oblast; G.I. Shklyar – in Sverdlovsk Oblast; L.B. Zalin – in Kazakhstan; Krukovsky – in Central Asia; Trotsky – in Eastern Siberia, and Rutkovsky – in the Northern Krai.

All these high placed NKVD officials were tossed from one oblast to another in exactly the same manner as the secretaries of obkoms. Take, for instance, Vladimir Tsesarsky: was plenipotentiary of the GPU-NKVD in Odessa, Kiev and in the Far East. By 1937 he had risen to the head of the Special section of the Main Directorate of State Security of the NKVD (just before Shapiro). Or look at S. Mironov-Korol: in 1933-36 he was the head of the Dnepropetrovsk GPU-NKVD; in 1937 he was in charge of the Western Siberian NKVD; he also served in the central apparatus of the GPU-NKVD.[56] In the mid-1930s, we see L. Vul as the head of Moscow and later of Saratov Police. The plenipotentiary in Moscow was L. Belsky (after serving in Central Asia); later, he had risen to the head of the Internal Service Troops of the NKVD. In the 1930s we see many others: Foshan was in charge of the border troops; Meerson was the head of the Economic Planning section of the NKVD; L.I. Berenzon and later L.M. Abramson headed the finance department of the GULag; and Abram Flikser headed the personnel section of the GULag. All these are disconnected pieces of information, not amenable to methodical anal Moreover, there were special sections in each provincial office of the NKVD. Here is another isolated bit of information: Yakov Broverman was the head of Secretariat of the Special Section of the NKVD in Kiev; he later worked in the same capacity in the central NKVD apparatus.[57]

Later, in 1940, when the Soviets occupied the Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, the head of the Dvinsk NKVD was one Kaplan. He dealt so harshly with the people there, that in 1941, when the Red Army had hardly left and before the arrival of Germans, there was an explosion of public outrage against the Jews.

In the novel by D.P. Vitkovsky, Half-life, there is a phrase about the Jewish looks of investigator, Yakovlev (the action is set during Khrushchev's regime). Vitovsky put it rather harshly so that Jews, who by the end of the 1960s were already on the way of breaking away from communism and in their new political orientation developed sympathy to any camp memoirs, were nonetheless repulsed by such a description. I remember V. Gershuni asked me how many other Jewish investigators did Vitovsky come across during his 30-year-long ordeal?

What an astonishing forgetfulness betrayed by that rather innocent slip! Would not it have been more appropriate to mention not the "30 years" but 50 years, or, at least, 40 years? Indeed, Vitovsky might not have encountered many Jewish investigators during his last thirty years, from the end of the 1930s (though they could still be found around even in the 1960s). Yet Vitovsky was persecuted by the Organs for forty years; he survived the Solovki camp; and he apparently did not forget the time when a Russian investigator was a less frequent sight than a Jewish or a Latvian one.

Nevertheless, Gershuni was right in implying that all these outstanding and not so outstanding posts were fraught with death for their occupants; the more so, the closer it was to 1937-38.

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Our arbiters confidently ruled from their heights and when they were suddenly delivered a blow, it must have seemed to them like the collapse of the universe, like the end of the world. Wasn't there anyone among them before the onslaught who reflected on the usual fate of revolutionaries?

Among the major communist functionaries who perished in 1937-38, the Jews comprise an enormous percentage. For example, a modern historian writes that if "from 1 January 1935 to 1 January 1938 the members of this nationality headed more than 50% of the main structural units of the central apparatus of the people's commissariat of internal affairs, then by 1 January 1939 they headed only 6%."[58]

Using numerous "execution lists" that were published over the recent decades, and the biographical tomes of the modern Russian Jewish Encyclopedia, we are able to trace to some degree the fates of those outstanding and powerful Chekists, Red commanders, Soviet party officials, diplomats, and others, whom we mentioned in the previous chapters of this book.

Among the Chekists the destruction was particularly overwhelming (the names of those executed are italicized):

G.Ya. Abrampolsky; L.M. Abramson, died in prison in 1939; Yakov Agranov, 1938;[59] Abram Belenky, 1941; Lev Belsky-Levin, 1941; Matvey Berman, 1939; Boris Berman, 1939; Iosif Blat, 1937; Ya. Veinshtok, 1939; Leonid Vul, 1938, Mark Gai-Shtoklyand, 1937; Semyon Gendin, 1939; Benjamin Gerson, 1941; Lev Zadov-Zinkovsky, 1938; Lev Zalin-Levin, 1940; A. Zalpeter, 1939; Lev Zakharov-Meyer, 1937; N.Zelikman, 1937; Aleksandr Ioselevich, 1937, Zinovy Katsnelson, 1938; Lazar Kogan, 1939; Mikhail Koltsov-Fridlyand, 1940; Georg Krukovsky, 1938; Izrail Leplevsky, 1938; Natan Margolin, 1938; A. Minaev-Tsikanovsky, 1939; Lev Mironov-Kagan, 1938; Sergey Mironov-Korol, 1940; Karl Pauker, 1937; Izrail Pliner, 1939; Mikhail Raev-Kaminsky, 1939; Aleksandr Radzivilovsky, 1940; Naum Raysky-Lekhtman, 1939; Grigoriy Rappoport, 1938; Ilya Ressin, 1940; A. Rutkovsky; Pinkhus Simanovsky, 1940; Abram Slutsky, poisoned in 1938; David Sokolinsky, 1940; Mikhail Trilisser; Leonid Fayvilovich, 1936;

Vladimir Tsesarsky, 1940; A. Shanin, 1937; Isaak Shapiro, 1940; Evsey Shirvindt, 1938; Grigoriy Shklyar; Sergey Shpigelglas, 1940; Genrikh Yagoda, 1938.

Nowadays entire directories, containing lists of the highest officials of the Central Apparatus of the Main Directorate of State Security of the NKVD who fell during the Ezhov's period of executions and repressions, are published. There we see many more Jewish names.[60]

But only accidentally, thanks to the still unbridled glasnost that began in the beginning of the 1990s, we learn about several mysterious biographies formerly shrouded in secrecy. For example, from 1937, professor Grigory Mayranovsky, a specialist in poisons, headed the "Laboratory X" in the Special Section of Operations Technology of the NKVD, which carried out death sentences through injections with poisons by "the direct decision of the government in 1937-47 and in 1950"; the executions were performed in a special prisoner cell at "Laboratory X" as well as abroad even in the 1960s and 1970s.[61] Mayranovsky was arrested only in 1951; from his cell he wrote to Beria: "Dozens of sworn enemies of the Soviet Union, including all kinds of nationalists, were destroyed by my hand."[62] And from the astonishing disclosure in 1990 we learned that the famous mobile gas chambers were invented, as it turns out, not by Hitler during the World War II, but in the Soviet NKVD in 1937 by Isai Davidovich Berg, the head of the administrative and maintenance section of the NKVD of Moscow Oblast (sure, he was not alone in that enterprise, but he organized the whole business). This is why it is also important to know who occupied middle-level posts. It turns out, that I.D. Berg was entrusted with carrying out the sentences of the "troika" of the NKVD of Moscow Oblast; he dutifully performed his mission, which involved shuttling prisoners to the execution place. But when three "troikas" began to work simultaneously in the Moscow Oblast, the executioners became unable to cope with the sheer number of executions. Then they invented a time-saving method: the victims were stripped naked, tied, mouths plugged, and thrown into a closed truck, outwardly disguised as a bread truck. On the road the exhaust fumes were redirected into the prisoner-carrying compartment, and by the time the van arrived to the burial ditch, the prisoners were "ready." (Well, Berg himself was shot in 1939, not for those evil deeds, of course, but for "the anti-Soviet conspiracy". In 1956 he was rehabilitated without any problem, though the story of his murderous invention was kept preserved and protected in the records of his case and only recently discovered by journalists)[63]

There are so many individuals with outstanding lives and careers in the list above! Bela Kun, the Butcher of Crimea, himself fell at that time, and with him the lives of twelve Commissars of the communist government of Budapest ended.[64]

However, it would be inappropriate to consider the expulsion of Jews from the punitive organs as a form of persecution. There was no anti-Jewish motif in those events. (Notwithstanding, that if Stalin's praetorians valued not only their present benefits and power but also the opinion of the people whom they governed, they should have left the NKVD and not have waited until they were kicked out. Still, this wouldn't have spared many

of them death, but surely it would have spared them the stigma?) The notion of purposeful anti-Jewish purge doesn't hold water: "according to available data, at the end of the 1930s the Jews were one of the few national minorities, belonging to which did not constitute a "crime" for an NKVD official. There were still no regulations on national and personnel policy in the state security agencies that was enforced … from the end of the 1940s to the early 1950s"[65]

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Many Party activists fell under the destructive wave of 1937-1938. From 1936-37 the composition of the Soviet of People's Commissars began to change noticeably as the purges during the pre-war years ran through the prominent figures in the people's commissariats. The main personage behind collectivization, Yakovlev, had met his bullet; the same happened to his comrades-in-arms, Kalmanovich and Rukhimovich, and many others. The meat-grinder devoured many old "honored" Bolsheviks, such as the long-retired Ryazanov or the organizer of the murder of the Tsar Goloshchekin, not to mention Kamenev and Zinovyev. (Lazar Kaganovich was spared although, he himself was the "iron broom" in several purges during 1937-38; for example, they called his swift purge of the city of Ivanov the "Black Tornado.")[66]

They offer us the following interpretation: "This is a question about the victims of the Soviet dictatorship; they were used by it and then mercilessly discarded when their services became redundant."[67] What a great argument! So for twenty years these powerful Jews were really used? Yet weren't they themselves the zealous cogs in the mechanism of that very dictatorship right up to the very time when their "services became redundant"? Did not they make the great contribution to the destruction of religion and culture, the intelligentsia, and the multi-million peasantry?

A great many Red Army commanders fell under the axe. "By the summer of 1938 without exception all… commanders of military districts … who occupied these posts by June 1937 disappeared without a trace." The Political Administration of the Red Army "suffered the highest losses from the terror" during the massacre of 1937, after the suicide of Gamarnik. Of the highest political officers of the Red Army, death claimed all 17 army commissars, 25 out of 28 corps commissars, and 34 out of 36 brigade (divisional) commissars.[68] We see a significant percentage of Jews in the now-published lists of military chiefs executed in 1937-38.[69]

Grigory Shtern had a very special military career; he advanced along the political officer's path. During the Civil War he was military commissar at regimental, brigade, and divisional levels. In 1923-25 he was the head of all special detachments in the Khorezm [a short-lived republic after the Bolshevik revolution] troops during the suppression of rebellions in Central Asia. Until 1926, he was the head of the political administration division. Later he studied at the military academy for senior military officers [and thus became eligible for proper military

posts]; in 1929-34 he was a "military advisor to the Republican government in Spain" (not to be confused with Manfred Shtern, who also distinguished himself among the Red Spaniards under the alias of "General Kleber"). Later he was the Chief of Staff of the Far Eastern Front and conducted bloody battles at Lake Khasan in 1938 together with Mekhlis, at the same time conspiring against Marshall Blücher, whom he ruined and whose post of the front commander he took over after the arrest of the latter. In March 1939, at the 18th Party Congress, he made this speech: "Together we have destroyed a bunch of good-for-nothings— the Tukhachevskys, Gamarniks, Uborevichs [former Soviet Marshalls[and similar others." Well, he himself was shot later, in autumn 1941.[70] Shtern's comrade-in-arms in aviation, Yakov Smushkevich, also had a head-spinning career. He too began as a political officer (until the mid-1930s); then he studied at the academy for top officers. In 1936-37 he had also fought in Spain, in aviation, and was known as "General Douglas". In 1939 he was commander of the aviation group at Khalkhin Gol [on the Manchurian-Mongolian border, site of Soviet-Japanese battles won by the Russians]. After that he rose to the commander of all air forces of the Red Army – the General Inspector of the Air Force; he was arrested in May 1941 and executed in the same year.[71]

The wave of terror spared neither administrators, nor diplomats; almost all of the diplomats mentioned above were executed.

Let's name those party, military, diplomatic, and managerial figures whom we mentioned before on these pages who now were persecuted (the names of the executed are italicized):

Samuil Agursky, arrested in 1938; Lazar Aronshtam, 1938; Boris Belenky, 1938; Grigory Belenky, 1938; Zakhar Belenky,1940; Mark Belenky, 1938; Moris Belotsky, 1938; German Bitker, 1937; Aron Vainshtein, 1938; Yakov Vesnik, 1938; Izrail Veitser, 1938; Abram Volpe, 1937; Yan Gamarnik, committed suicide in 1937; Mikhail Gerchikov, 1937; Evgeny Gnedin, arrested in 1939; Philip Goloshchekin, 1941; Ya. Goldin, 1938; Lev Gordon, arrested in 1939; Isaak Grinberg, 1938; Yakov Gugel, 1937; Aleksandr Gurevich, 1937; Sholom Dvoilatsky, 1937; Maks Deych, 1937; Semyon Dimanshtein, 1938; Efim Dreitser, 1936; Semyon Zhukovsky, 1940; Samuil Zaks, 1937; Zinovy Zangvil, Isaak Zelensky, 1938; Grigory Zinovyev, 1936; S. Zorin-Gomberg, 1937; Boris Ippo, 1937; Mikhail Kaganovich, committed suicide in expectation of arrest, 1941; Moisey Kalmanovich, 1937; Lev Kamenev, 1936; Abram Kamensky, 1938; Grigoriy Kaminsky, 1938; Ilya Kit-Viytenko, arrested in 1937 and spent 20 years in camps; I.M. Kleiner, 1937; Evgeniya Kogan, 1938; Aleksandr Krasnoshchyokov-Tobinson, 1937; Lev Kritsman, 1937; Solomon Kruglikov, 1938; Vladimir Lazarevich, 1938; Mikhail Landa, 1938; Ruvim Levin, 1937; Yakov Livshits, 1937; Moisey Lisovsky, arrested in 1938; Frid Markus, 1938; Lev Maryasin, 1938; Grigory Melnichansky, 1937; Aleksandr Minkin-Menson, died in camp in 1955; Nadezhda Ostrovskaya, 1937; Lev Pechersky, 1937; I. Pinson, 1936; Iosif Pyatnitsky-Tarshis, 1938; Izrail Razgon, 1937; Moisey Rafes, 1942; Grigory Roginsky, 1939; Marsel Rozenberg, 1938; Arkady Rozengolts, 1938; Naum Rozovsky, 1942; Boris Royzenman, 1938; E. Rubinin, spent 15 years in camps; Yakov Rubinov, 1937; Moisey

Rukhimovich, 1938; Oskar Ryvkin, 1937; David Ryazanov, 1938; Veniamin Sverdlov, 1939; Boris Skvirsky, 1941; Iosif Slavin, 1938; Grigoriy Sokolnikov-Brilliant, killed in prison, 1939; Isaak Solts, died in confinement in 1940; Naum Sokrin, 1938; Lev Sosnovsky, 1937; Artur Stashevsky-Girshfeld, 1937; Yury Steklov-Nakhamkis, 1941; Nikolay Sukhanov-Gimmer, 1940; Boris Tal, 1938; Semyon Turovsky, 1936; Semyon Uritsky, 1937; Evgeny Fainberg, 1937; Vladimir Feigin, 1937; Boris Feldman, 1937; Yakov Fishman, arrested in 1937; Moisey Frumkin, 1938; Maria Frumkina-Ester, died in camp, 1943; Leon Khaikis, 1938; Avenir Khanukaev; Moisey Kharitonov, died in camp, 1948; Mendel Khataevich, 1937; Tikhon Khvesin, 1938; Iosif Khodorovsky, 1938; Mordukh Khorosh, 1937; Isay Tsalkovich, arrested in 1937; Efim Tsetlin, 1937; Yakov Chubin; N. Chuzhak-Nasimovich; Lazar Shatskin, 1937; Akhiy Shilman, 1937; Ierokhim Epshtein, arrested in 1938; Iona Yakir, 1937; Yakov Yakovlev-Epshtein, 1938; Grigory Shtern, 1941.

This is indeed a commemoration roster of many top-placed Jews.

Below are the fates of some prominent Russian Jewish socialists, who did not join the Bolsheviks or who even struggled against them.

Boris Osipovich Bogdanov (born 1884) was an Odessan, the grandson and son of lumber suppliers. He graduated from the best commerce school in Odessa. While studying, he joined Social Democrat societies. In June 1905, he was the first civilian who got on board the mutinous battleship, Potemkin, when she entered the port of Odessa; he gave a speech for her crew, urging sailors to join Odessa's labor strike; he delivered letters with appeals to consulates of the European powers in Russia. He avoided punishment by departing for St. Petersburg where he worked in the Social Democratic underground; he was a Menshevik. He was sentenced to two 2-year-long exiles, one after another, to Solvychegodsk and to Vologda. Before the war, he entered the elite of the Menshevik movement; he worked legally on labor questions. In 1915 he became the secretary of the Labor Group at the Military Industrial Committee, was arrested in January 1917 and freed by the February Revolution. He was a member of the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies of Petrograd, and regularly chaired its noisy sessions which attracted thousands of people. From June 1917 he was a member of the Bureau of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and persistently opposed ongoing attempts of the Bolsheviks to seize power. After the failed Bolshevik rebellion in July 1917 he accepted the surrender of the squad of sailors besieged in the Petropavlovsk Fortress. After the October coup, in 1918 he was one of the organizers of anti-Bolshevik workers movement in Petrograd. During the Civil War he lived in Odessa. After the Civil War he tried to restart the Menshevik political activity, but at the end of 1920 he was arrested for one year. That was the beginning of many years of unceasing arrests and sentences, exiles and camps, and numerous transfers between different camps — the so-called "Great Road" of so many socialists in the USSR. And all that was just for being a Menshevik in the past and for having Menshevik convictions even though by that time he no longer engaged in politics and during brief respites simply

worked on economic posts and just wanted a quiet life; however, he was suspected of economic "sabotage." In 1922 he requested permission to emigrate, but shortly before departure was arrested again. First he was sent to the Solovki prison camp and later exiled to the Pechora camp [in the Urals]; his sentences were repeatedly extended by three years; he experienced solitary confinement in the Suzdal camp and was repeatedly exiled. In 1931 they attempted to incriminate him in the case of the "All-Soviet Bureau of Mensheviks," but he was lucky and they left him alone. Yet he was hauled in again in 1937, imprisoned in the Omsk jail (together with already-imprisoned communists), where he survived non-stop interrogations which sometimes continued without a pause for weeks, at any time of the day or night (there were three shifts of investigators); he served out 7 years in the Kargopol camp (several other Mensheviks were shot there); later he was exiled to Syktyvkar; in 1948 he was again sentenced and exiled to Kazakhstan. In 1956 he was rehabilitated; he died in 1960, a worn-out old man.

Boris Davidovich Kamkov-Kats (born 1885) was the son of a country doctor. From adolescence, he was a member of the Socialist Revolutionary Party. Exiled in 1905 to the Turukhan Krai, he escaped. Abroad, he graduated from the Heidelberg University School of Law. He was a participant in the Zimmerwald [Switzerland] Conference of socialists (1915). After the February Revolution he returned to Russia. He was one of the founders of the Left Socialist Revolutionary Party; at the time of the October coup he entered into a coalition with the Bolsheviks. He took part in the dispersal of the Russian Constituent Assembly in January 1918. From April he urged breaking the alliance with the Bolsheviks; in June he already urged "a revolutionary uprising against them. After the failed rebellion of the Socialist Revolutionaries, he went underground. After a brief arrest in 1920, he was arrested again in 1921, and exiled in 1923. Between exiles he spent two years in prison and experienced the same "Great Road." In 1933 he was exiled to Archangel; he was arrested again in 1937 and executed in 1938.

Abram Rafailovich Gots (born 1882) was the grandson of a millionaire tea merchant, V.Ya. Visotsky. From the age of 14, he was in the the Socialist Revolutionary movement from the very creation of the SR party in 1901 (his brother Mikhail was the party leader). From 1906, he was a terrorist, a member of the militant wing of the SRs. From 1907-1915 he was in hard labor camps; he spent some time sitting in the infamous Aleksandrovsky Central. He was a participant of the February Revolution in Irkutsk and later in Petrograd. He was a member of the executive committees of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies of Petrograd and of the Soviet Peasant's Deputies and a member of the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. From 25 October 1917 he headed the anti-Bolshevik Committee for the Salvation of the Motherland and Revolution. During the Civil War he continued his struggle against Bolsheviks. In 1920 he was arrested; at the trial of the Socialist Revolutionaries in 1922 he was sentenced to death, commuted to 5 years of imprisonment. Later he experienced the "Great Road" of endless new prison terms and exiles. In 1939 he was sentenced to 25 years in the camps and died in one a year later.

Mikhail Yakovlevich Gendelman (born 1881) was an attorney-at-law and a Socialist Revolutionary from 1902. He participated in the February Revolution in Moscow, was a member of the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Soldiers' and Workers' Deputies, a member of the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, and a member of the Central Committee of the Socialist Revolutionary Party. On 25 October 1917, he left the meeting of the 2nd All-Russian Congress of the Soviets in protest against the Bolsheviks. He was elected to the Constituent Assembly and participated in its only session, on 5 January 1918. Later in Samara he participated in the Committee of Members of the Constituent Assemby. He was arrested in 1921; in 1922 he was sentenced to death at the trial of the Socialist Revolutionaries, commuted to 5 years in prison. After numerous prison terms and exiles, he was shot in 1938.

Mikhail Isaakovich Liber-Goldman (born 1880) was one of the founders of the Bund (1897), a member of the Central Committee of the [General Jewish Labor] Bund of Lithuania, Poland and Russia in Emigration; he represented the Bund at the congresses of the Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party. He participated in the revolution of 1905-06. In 1910 he was exiled for three years to Vologda Province, fled soon thereafter and emigrated again. He was a steady and uncompromising opponent of Lenin. He returned to Russia after 1914, and joined the Socialist "Defender" movement ("Defense of the Motherland in War"). After the February revolution, he was a member of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet of Soldiers' and Workers' Deputies, and later he was a member of the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. (He left the latter post after the October coup). Then he briefly participated in the Social Democratic Workers' Party of the Mensheviks. He worked on economic positions andwas one of the leaders of the Menshevik underground in the USSR. His "Great Road" arrests and exiles began in1923. He was arrested again and executed in Alma-Ata in 1937.

For many, there was a similar fate, with repeated sentences and exiles, right up to the climax of 1937-38.

Yet in those years purges swept all over the country, destroying the lives of countless ordinary people, including Jews, people who had nothing to do with politics or authority. Here are some of the Jews who perished:

Nathan Bernshtein (born 1876) a music scholar and critic; he taught the history of music and aesthetics and wrote a number of books; arrested in 1937, he died in prison.

Matvei Bronshtein (born 1906) a talented theoretical physicist, Doctor of Science, who achieved extraordinary results. He was the husband of Lyudmila K. Chukovskaya. Arrested in 1937, he was executed in 1938.

Sergey Ginter (born 1870) an architect and engineer; arrested in 1934, exiled to Siberia, arrested again in 1937 and executed.

Veniamin Zilbermints (born 1887) a mineralogist and geochemist; specialist on rare elements, he laid the foundation for semi-conductor science; he was persecuted in 1938.

Mikhail Kokin (born 1906) an Orientalist, Sinologist and historian, arrested in 1937 and executed.

Ilya Krichevsky (born 1885) a microbiologist, immunologist (also trained in physics and mathematics), Doctor of Medical Sciences, founder of a scientific school, chairman of the National Association of Microbiologists; arrested in 1938 and died in 1943.

Solomon Levit (born 1894), geneticist; he studied the role of heredity and environment in pathology. Arrested in 1938 and died in prison.

Iokhiel Ravrebe (born 1883), an Orientalist, Judaist, one of the founders of the reestablished Jewish Ethnographic Society in 1920. Accused of creating a Zionist organization, he was arrested in 1937 and died in prison.

Vladimir Finkelshtein (born 1896), a chemical physicist, professor, corresponding member of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences; he had many works in applied electrical chemistry; persecuted in 1937.

Ilya Khetsrov (born 1887), a hygienist and epidemiologist; he studied environmental hygiene, protection of water resources, and community hygiene. Arrested in 1938 and executed.

Nakhum Schwartz (born 1888), a psychiatrist, studied Jewish psychology. In 1921-23 he taught Hebrew and wrote poetry in Hebrew. Accused of Zionist activity, he was arrested in 1937 and later died in prison.

Here are the fates of the three brothers Shpilrein from Rostov-on-Don. Jan (born 1887) was a mathematician; he applied mathematical methods in electrical and heat engineering, he was professor at the Bauman Moscow State Technical University and later the dean of its Electrical Engineering Department. He was persecuted and died in 1937. Isaak (born 1891) was a psychologist, Doctor of Philosophy. In 1927 he became the head of the All-Russian Society of Psychotechnology and Applied Psychophysiology; he performed extensive psychological analysis of professions and optimization of working environment. He was arrested in 1935 and later executed. Emil (born 1899) was a biologist, the dean of the Biology Department of Rostov University. He was shot in 1937.

Leonid Yurovsky (born 1884) Doctor of Political Economy, one of the authors of the monetary reform of 1922-24. A close friend to A.V. Chayanov and N.D. Kondratev [prominent Russian scientists], he was arrested in 1930, freed in 1935, then arrested again in 1937 and executed.

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Despite the overwhelming percentage of high-placed, "aristocratic" Jews, who fell under Stalin's axe, the free Western press did not perceive the events as specifically the persecution of Jews: the Jews were massacred simply because of their abundance in the top tiers of the Soviet hierarchy. Indeed, we read such a stipulation in the collection of works Evreysky Mir [The Jewish World] (1939): "No doubt that the Jews in the USSR have numerous opportunities, which they did not have before the revolution, and which they do not have even now in some democratic countries. They can become generals, ministers, diplomats, professors, the most high-ranking and the most servile aristocrats." Opportunities but "in no way rights", because of the absence of such rights, "Yakir, Garmanik, Yagoda, Zinovyev, Radek, Trotsky" and the rest fell from their heights and lost their very lives."[72] Still, no nationality enjoyed such a right under the communist dictatorship; it was all about the ability to cling to power.

The long-time devoted socialist, emigrant S. Ivanovich (S.O. Portugeis), admitted: "Under the Tsars, the Jews were indeed restricted in their 'right of living'; yet their 'right to live' was incomparably greater then than under Bolshevism." Indeed. However, at the same time, despite being perfectly aware of collectivization, he writes that the "awkward attempts to establish 'socialism' in Russia took the heaviest toll from the Jews"; that "the scorpions of Bolshevism did not attack any other people with such brutal force as they attacked Jews."[73]

Yet during the Great Plague of dekulakization, it was not thousands but millions of peasants who lost both their 'right of living' and the 'right to live'. And yet all the Soviet pens (with so many Jews among them) kept complete silence about this cold-blooded destruction of the Russian peasantry. In unison with them, the entire West was silent. Could it be really out of the lack of knowledge? Or was it for the sake of protecting the Soviet regime? Or was it simply because of indifference? Why, this is almost inconceivable: 15 million peasants were not simply deprived of entering the institutes of higher learning or of the right to study in graduate school, or to occupy nice posts — no! They were dispossessed and driven like cattle out of their homes and sent to certain death in the taiga and tundra. And the Jews, among other passionate urban activists, enthusiastically took the reins of the collectivization into their hands, leaving behind them persistent evil memory. And who had raised their voices in defense of the peasants then? And now, in 1932-33, in Russia and Ukraine – on the very outskirts of Europe, five to six million people died from hunger! And the free press of the free world maintained utter silence… And even if we take into account the extreme Leftist bias of the contemporary Western press and its devotion to the socialist "experiment" in the USSR, it is still impossible not to be amazed at the degree to which they could go to be blind and insensitive to the sufferings of even tens of millions of fellow humans.

If you don't see it, your heart doesn't cry.

During the 1920s, the Ukrainian Jews departed from their pro-Russian-statehood mood of 1917-1920, and by the end of the 1920s "the Jews are among Ukrainian chauvinists and

separatists, wielding enormous influence there—but only in the cities."[74] We can find such a conclusion: the destruction of Ukrainian-language culture in 1937 was in part aimed against Jews, who formed "a genuine union" with Ukrainians "for the development of local culture in Ukrainian language."[75] Nevertheless, such a union in cultural circles could not soften the attitudes of the wider Ukrainian population toward Jews. We have already seen in the previous chapter how in the course of collectivization "a considerable number of Jewish communists functioned in rural locales as commanders and lords over life and death."[76] This placed a new scar on Ukrainian-Jewish relations, already tense for centuries. And although the famine was a direct result of Stalin's policy, and not only in Ukraine (it brutally swept across the Volga Region and the Urals), the suspicion widely arose among Ukrainians that the entire Ukrainian famine was the work of the Jews. Such an interpretation has long existed (and the Ukrainian émigré press adhered to it until the 1980s). "Some Ukrainians are convinced that 1933 was the revenge of the Jews for the times of Khmelnitsky."[77] [A 17th century Cossack leader who conducted bloody anti-Jewish pogroms in Ukraine].

Don't expect to reap wheat where the weed was sewn. The supreme authority of so many Jews along with only a small number of Jews being touched by the grievances which afflicted the rest of population could lead to all sorts of interpretations.

Jewish authors who nervously kept an eye on anti-Semitism in the USSR did not notice this trampled ash, however, and made rather optimistic conclusions. For instance, Solomon Schwartz writes: "From the start of the 1930s, anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union quickly abated", and "in the mid-1930s it lost the character of a mass phenomenon …anti-Semitism reached the all-time low point." He explains this, in part, as the result of the end of the NEP (the New Economic Policy) and thereby the disappearance of Jewish businessmen and petty Jewish merchants. Later, "forced industrialization and lightning-fast collectivization," which he favorably compares with a kind of "shock therapy, i.e., treatment of mental disorders with electric shocks," was of much help. In addition he considers that in those years the ruling communist circles began to struggle with Great-Russian "chauvinism." (Well, they did not begin; they just continued the policy of Lenin's intolerance). Schwartz soundly notes that the authorities were "persistently silent about anti-Semitism", "in order to avoid the impression that the struggle against Great-Russian chauvinism is a struggle for the Jews."[78]

In January 1931, first the New York Times,[79] and later the entire world press published a sudden and ostentatious announcement by Stalin to the Jewish Telegraph Agency: "The Communists, as consistent internationalists, cannot help but be an irreconcilable and sworn enemy of anti-Semitism. In the USSR, anti-Semitism is strictly prosecuted by law as a phenomenon deeply hostile to the Soviet order. Active anti-Semites are punished, according to the laws of the USSR, with the death penalty."[80] See, he addressed the democratic West and did not mind specifying the punishment. And it was only one nationality in the USSR that was set apart by being granted such a protection. And world opinion was completely satisfied with that.

But characteristically, the announcement by the Leader was not printed in the Soviet press (because of his cunning reservations); it was produced for export and he hid this position from his own citizens; in the USSR it was only printed at the end of 1936.[81] Then Stalin sent Molotov to make a similar announcement at the Congress of Soviets.

A contemporary Jewish author, erroneously interpreting Molotov's speech, suggests that speaking on behalf of the government he threatened to punish "anti-Semitic feelings" with death.[82] Feelings! No, Molotov did not mention anything like that; he did not depart from Stalin's policy of persecuting "active anti-Semites." We are not aware of any instance of death penalty in the 1930s for anti-Semitism, but people were sentenced for it according to the Penal Code. (People whispered that before the revolution the authorities did not punish as harshly even for libels against the Tsar.)

But now S. Schwartz observes a change: "In the second half of the 1930s, these sentiments [people's hostility toward Jews] became much more prevalent … particularly in the major centers, where the Jewish intelligentsia and semi-intelligentsia were concentrated…. Here again the legend about "Jewish domination" gradually began to come back to life, and they began to spread exaggerated notions about the role of Jews in the middle and top ranks of government." Well, whether or not it was really a legend, he immediately attempted to explain it, though in a quite naïve manner, suggesting the same old excuse that the Jewish intelligentsia and semi-intelligentsia simply had almost no other source of livelihood under Soviet conditions except the government service."[83]

This is so shameful to read. What oppression and despair! See, they had almost no other sources of livelihood, only privileged ones. And the rest of population was absolutely free to toil on kolkhoz fields, to dig pits, and to roll barrows at the great construction projects of the 5-year plans…

In official policy, nothing had changed in the 1930s in the Jewish Question from the time of the revolution; no official hostility toward Jews existed. Indeed, they used to dream and proclaim about the impending end of all national conflicts.

And the foreign Jewish circles did not and could not sense any oppression of the Jews in the USSR. In the article The Jews and the Soviet Dictatorship, S. Ivanovich wrote: "Abroad, many believe that there is no anti-Semitism in Russia, and on that basis they are favorably disposed toward the Soviet authorities. But in Russia they know that this is not true." However, Jews "pray for the long-life of the Soviet regime … and are strongly afraid of its demise," for "Stalin protects them from pogroms and hopefully would protect them in future." The author sympathizes with such an opinion, although he considers it flawed: "If the Bolshevik dictatorship falls, no doubt there will be wild anti-Semitic ravages and violence …The fall of the Soviet regime would be a catastrophe for the Jews, and any friend of the Jewish people should reject such a prospect with horror"; yet at the same time he remarks

that “the Soviet dictatorship is already embarrassed by the Judeophilia and Jewish dominance attributed to it.”[84]

The resolution on Stalin’s report at the 16th Party Congress provided the general political direction for the 1930s, calling for an energetic struggle against chauvinism, and primarily against the Great Russian chauvinism. The Party language was easily understood by all. And for several more years this struggle was enthusiastically carried on. Yet what kind of Stalinist madness was it? By that time there was no trace left of the Great Russian chauvinism. Stalin was not able to envision the immediate future [of WWII] – when only Russian patriotism would save him from imminent doom.

Then they have already started to sound the alarm about the danger of any rebirth of Russian patriotism. In 1939, S. Ivanovich claimed to notice a trend “of this dictatorship returning to some national traditions of Moscovite Russ and Imperial Russia”; he caustically cited several stamps that entered popular discourse around that time such as the “‘love for the Motherland’, ‘national pride’ etc.”[85]

See, this is where the mortal danger for Russia lurked then, immediately before Hitler’s assault – in that ugly Russian patriotism!

This alarm did not leave the minds of Jewish publicists for the next half century, even when they looked back at that war, when mass patriotism blazed up, at the war which saved Soviet Jewry. So in 1988 we read in an Israeli magazine: “Vivid traditions of the Black Hundreds … were the foundation of ‘vivifying Soviet patriotism’, which blossomed later, during the Great Patriotic War”[86] [the official Russian designation for the Eastern front in WWII].

Looking back at that war of 1941-1945, let’s admit that this is a highly ungrateful judgment.

So, even the purest and most immaculate Russian patriotism has no right to exist – not now, not ever?

Why is it so? And why it is that Russian patriotism is thus singled out?

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An important event in Jewish life in the USSR was the closing of the YevSek at the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party of Bolsheviks in 1930. Though in accord with the Soviet blueprint, this act blocked any separate development of a Jewish society having “national, cultural, and individual Jewish autonomy.” From now on Jewish cultural development lay within the Soviet mainstream. In 1937-38 the leading Yevseks – Dimanshtein, Litvakov, Frumkina-Ester and their associates Motl Kiper, Itskhok Sudarsky, Aleksandr Chemerissky – who, in words of Yu. Margolina, “in the service of the authorities carried out the greatest pogrom against Jewish culture,”[87] were arrested and soon executed. Many Yevseks, “occupying governing positions in the central and local

departments of the Society for Settling Toiling Jews on the Land (OZET) and in the Jewish community, Jewish cultural and educational structures," also fell under the juggernaut. In 1936-39, the majority of them were persecuted."[88] The poisonous atmosphere of 1930s now reached these levels too. During open public meetings they began to accuse and expose prominent Jewish communists, who at some time before were members either of the Bund or of the Zionist Socialist Party, or even of Poale-Zion, all of which were crippled under the Soviet regime. Was there anyone, whose past the Bolsheviks did not try to criminalize? "Who have you been before…?" In 1938 Der Emes was closed also.

What about education? "Right up to 1933 the number of Jewish schools and Jewish students in them increased despite the early (1920s) critique "of nationalistic over-zealousness"' in the actions of the Yevseks on the 'forced transition of Jewish education into Yiddish.'"[89] From 1936 to 1939 a "period of accelerated decline and even more accelerated inner impoverishment" of the schools in Yiddish was noted.[90] After 1936-37 "the number of Jewish schools began to decline quickly even in Ukraine and Belorussia"; the desire of parents to send their children to such schools had diminished. "Education in Yiddish was seen as less and less prestigious; there was an effort to give children an education in the Russian language." Also, from the second half of the 1930s the number of institutions of higher education lecturing in Yiddish began to decline rapidly"; "almost all Jewish institutions of higher education and technical schools were closed by 1937-38."[91]

At the start of 1930s the Jewish scientific institutes at the academies of science of Ukraine and Belorussia were closed; in Kiev 'The Institute of Jewish Proletarian Culture' fell into desolation." And soon after this arrests followed (Mikhail Kokin of the Leningrad Institute of Philosophy, literature and History was executed; Iokhiel Rabrebe, formerly of the Petrograd Institute of Higher Jewish Studies, who in the 1930s headed the Jewish Section of the Public Library, was sentenced to 8 years and died in the transit camp).[92]

Persecutions spread to writers in Yiddish: Moyshe Kulbak was persecuted in 1937; Zelik Akselrod, in 1940; Abram Abchuk, a teacher of Yiddish and a critic, in 1937; writer Gertsl Bazov , was persecuted in 1938. Writer I. Kharik and critic Kh. Dunets were persecuted also.

Still, "literature in Yiddish was actively published until the end of the 1930s. Jewish publishers were working in Moscow, Kiev, and Minsk." Yet what kind of literature was it? In the 1930s "the overwhelming majority of works were written stereotypically, in accordance with the unshakable principles of 'socialist realism.'"[93] Literature in Yiddish "from the 1930s up to June 1941 … was marked by the cult of Stalin. Unbridled flattery for Stalin flowed from the bosom of Jewish poetry…"[94] Itsik Feder "managed to light up even official propaganda with lyrical notes. These monstrous sayings are ascribed to his pen: 'You betrayed your father — this is great!', and 'I say 'Stalin' but envision the sun.'"[95] Most of these writers, who zealously tried to please Stalin, were arrested ten years later. But some of them, as mentioned above, had already drawn this lot.

Similarly, “the ideological press of official communist doctrine signified for many Jewish artists and sculptors a complete break up, quite often tragic, with the national Jewish traditions.” (Still, what culture in the USSR was not touched by this?) So it comes as little surprise that “the overwhelming majority … of Jewish theaters devoted much attention to propaganda performances.” This included all 19 aforementioned professional Yiddish theaters and “numerous independent collectives, studios, and circles.”[96]

Concerning Hebrew culture which preserved the national traditions: it was by now conclusively banished and went underground.

It has already been mentioned that the Zionist underground was crushed by the beginning of the 1930s. Many Zionists were already rounded up, but still many others were accused of “the Zionist conspiracy.” Take Pinkhas Dashevsky (from Chapter 8) – in 1933 he was arrested as a Zionist. Pinkhas Krasny was not a Zionist but was listed as such in his death sentence. He was former Minister of Petliura’s Directorate, emigrated but later returned into the USSR. He was executed in 1939. Volf Averbukh, a Poale-Zionist from his youth, left for Israel in 1922, where “he collaborated with the communist press.” In 1930, he was sent back to the USSR, where he was arrested.[97]

“Most of the semi-legal cheder schools and yeshivas were shut down” around that time. Arrests rolled on from the late 1920s in the Hasidic underground. Yakov-Zakharia Maskalik was arrested in 1937, Abrom-Levik Slavin was arrested in 1939. By the end of 1933, “237 synagogues were closed, that is, 57% of all existing in the first years of Soviet authority … In the mid-1930s, the closure of synagogues accelerated.” From 1929, “the authorities began to impose excessive tax on matzo baking.” In 1937, “the Commission on the Questions of Religions at the Central Executive Committee of the USSR prohibited baking matzo in Jewish religious communities.” In 1937-38 “the majority of clergy of the Jewish religious cult were persecuted. There were no rabbis in the majority of still-functioning synagogues.”[98] “In 1938 a ‘hostile rabbinical nest’ was discovered in the Moscow Central Synagogue; the rabbis and a number of parishioners were arrested.”[99] The Rabbi of Moscow, Shmuel-Leib Medalia, was arrested and executed in 1938. (His son, Moishe Medalia, was arrested at the same time). In 1937, the Rabbi of Saratov, Iosif Bogatin, was arrested.[100]

In the early 1930s, when the Jewish religion was restricted in the USSR, the closing of thousands of Orthodox Christian temples and the destruction of many of them rolled along throughout the entire country. They especially hurried to “liberate” Soviet Moscow from the church; Boris Iofan was in charge of that “reconstruction.” In that bitter and hungry year of devastating breakdown of the country, they promoted projects for a grand Palace of Soviets in place of the Cathedral of Christ the Savior. Izvestiya reports: “So far, eleven projects are presented at the exhibition. Particularly interesting among them are the works of architects Fridman, B. Iofan, Bronshtein, and Ladovsky.”[101] Later, the arrests reached the architects as well.

The move toward ”settling the toiling Jews on the land” gradually became irrelevant for Soviet Jews. ”The percentage of Jewish settlers abandoning lands given to them remained high.” In 1930-32, the activity of foreign Jewish philanthropic organizations such as Agro-Joint, OKG, and EKO in the USSR, had noticeably decreased.” And although in 1933-38 it had still continued within the frameworks of new restrictive agreements, “in 1938 the activity ceased completely.” “In the first half of 1938, first the OZET and then the Committee for Settling the Toiling Jews on the Land (KomZET) were dissolved. The overwhelming majority of remaining associates of these organizations, who were still at liberty, were persecuted.” By 1939, “the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine decided to liquidate …’the artificially’ created national Jewish districts and boroughs.”[102]

Nonetheless, the idea of a Jewish colony in Birobidzhan was not abandoned in the 1930s and was even actively advanced by government. In order to put spirit into the masses, the authorities staged the Second All-Union Congress of the OZET in Moscow in December 1930.[103] By the end of 1931, the general population of that oblast was 45,000 with only 5,000 Jews among them, although whole villages with homes were built for their settlement and access roads were laid (sometimes by inmates from the camps nearby; for example, the train station of Birobidzhan was constructed in this manner).[104] Yet non-Jewish colonization of the region went faster than Jewish colonization.

In order to set matters right, in autumn of 1931 the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the RSFSR decreed that another 25,000 Jews should be settled in Birobidzhan during the next two years, after which it would be possible to declare it the Jewish Autonomous Republic. However, in the following years the number of Jews who left exceeded the number of Jews arriving, and by the end of 1933, after six years of colonization, the number of settled Jews amounted only to 8,000; of them only 1,500 lived in rural areas, i.e. worked in kolkhozes; that is, the Jews comprised less than 1/5 of all kolkhoz workers there. (There is also information that the land in the Jewish kolkhozes was fairly often tilled by hired Cossacks and Koreans). The oblast could not even provide enough agricultural products for its own needs.[105]

Nevertheless, in May 1934, when the non-Jewish population had already reached 50,000, Birobidzhan was loudly declared a Jewish Autonomous Oblast. (It still did not qualify for the status of a “republic.”)

Thus, there was no “national enthusiasm among the Jewish masses, which would ease the overcoming of the enormous difficulties inherent in such colonization.” There was no industry in Birobidzhan, and “the economic and social structure” of the settlers “resembled that of contemporary Jewish towns and shtetls in Ukraine and Belorussia” This was particularly true for the city of Birobidzhan, especially considering ”the increased role of the Jews in the local administrative apparatus.”[106]

Culture in Yiddish had certainly developed in the autonomous oblast – there were Jewish newspapers, radio, schools, a theater named after Kaganovich (its director was the future author E. Kazakevich), a library named after Sholem Aleichem, a museum of Jewish culture, and public reading facilities. Perets Markish had published the exultant article, A People Reborn, in the central press."[107] (In connection with Birobidzhan, let's note the fate of the demographer Ilya Veitsblit. His position was that "the policy of recruitment of poor urban Jews in order to settle them in rural areas should end"; "there are no declassé individuals among the Jews, who could be suitable for Birobidzhan." He was arrested in 1933 and likely died in prison).[108]

Yet the central authorities believed that that the colonization should be stimulated even further; and from 1934 they began a near compulsory recruitment among Jewish artisans and workers in the western regions, that is, among the urban population without a slightest knowledge of agriculture. The slogan rang out: "The entire USSR builds the Jewish Autonomous Oblast!" – meaning that recruitment of non-Jewish cadres is needed for quicker development. The ardent Yevsek Dimanshtein wrote that "we do not aim to create a Jewish majority in the Jewish Autonomous Oblast as soon as possible; … this would contradict to the principles of internationalism."[109]

But despite all these measures, during the next three years only another 11,000 to eight or nine thousand Jews were added to those already living there; still, most of newcomers preferred to stay in the oblast capital closer to its railroad station and looked for opportunities to escape). Yet as we know, the Bolsheviks may not be defeated or dispirited. So, because of dissatisfaction with the KomZET, in 1936 the "Central Executive Committee of the USSR decided to partially delegate the overseeing of Jewish resettlement in the Jewish Autonomous Oblast to the resettlement department of the NKVD."[110] In August of 1936, the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR proclaimed that "for the first time in the history of the Jewish people, their ardent desire to have their own homeland has been realized and their own national statehood has been established."[111] And now they began planning resettlement of 150,000 more Jews to Birobidzhan.

Looking back at it, the Soviet efforts to convert the Jews to agriculture suffered the same defeat as the Tsarist efforts a century before.

In the meantime, the year 1938 approached. KomZET was closed, OZET was disbanded, and the main Yevseks in Moscow and the administrators of the Jewish Autonomous Oblast were arrested. Those Birobidzhan Jews who could left for the cities of the Far East or for Moscow. According to the 1939 Census, the general population of the Jewish Autonomous Oblast consisted of 108,000 people; however, "the number of Jews there remained secret … the Jewish population of Birobidzhan was still low." Presumably, eighteen Jewish kolkhozes still existed, of 40-50 families each,[112] but in those kolkhozes … they conversed and corresponded with the authorities in Russian.

Yet what could Birobidzhan have become for Jews? Just forty-five years later, the Israeli General Beni Peled emphatically explained why neither Birobidzhan nor Uganda could give the Jewish people a sense of connection with the land: "I simply feel that I am not ready to die for a piece of land in Russia, Uganda, or New Jersey!…"[113]

This sense of connection, after thousands of years of estrangement, was restored by Israel.

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The migration of Jews to the major cities did not slow down in the 1930s. The Jewish Encyclopedia reports that, according to the Census of 1926, there were 131,000 Jews in Moscow; in 1933, there were 226,500; and in 1939, there were 250,000 Jews. "As a result of the massive resettlement of Ukrainian Jews, their share among Moscow Jewry increased to 80%."[114] In the Book on the Russian Jewry (1968), we find that in the 1930s up to a half-million Jews "were counted among government workers, sometimes occupying prominent posts, primarily in the economy."[115] (The author also reports, that in the 1930s "up to a half-million Jews became involved in industry, mainly in manual labor." On the other hand, Larin provides another figure, that among the industrial workers there were only 2.7% Jews or 200,000[116] or 2.5 times less than the first estimate). "The flow of Jews into the ranks of office workers grew constantly. The reason for this was the mass migration to cities, and also the sharp increase of the educational level, especially of Jewish youth."[117] The Jews predominantly lived in the major cities, did not experience artificial social restrictions, so familiar to their Russian peers, and, it needs to be said, they studied devotedly, thus preparing masses of technical cadres for the Soviet future.

Let's glance into statistical data: "in 1929 the Jews comprised 13.5% of all students in the higher educational institutions in the USSR; in 1933—12.2%; in 1936—13.3% of all students, and 18% of graduate students" (with their share of the total population being only 1.8%);[118] from 1928 to 1935, "the number of Jewish students per 1,000 of the Jewish population rose from 8.4 to 20.4 [while] per 1,000 Belorussians there were 2.4 students, and per 1,000 Ukrainians – 2.0"; and by 1935 "the percentage of Jewish students exceeded the percentage of Jews in the general population of the country by almost seven times, thus standing out from all other peoples of the Soviet Union."[119] G.V. Kostirchenko, who researched Stalin's policies on Jews, comments on the results of the 1939 census: "After all, Stalin could not disregard the fact that at the start of 1939 out of every 1,000 Jews, 268 had a high school education, and 57 out of 1,000 had higher education" (among Russians the figures were, respectively, 81 and 6 per 1,000).[120] It is no secret that "highly successful completion of higher education or doctoral studies allowed individuals to occupy socially-prestigious positions in the robustly developing Soviet economy of the 1930s."[121]

However, in The Book on Russian Jewry we find that "without exaggeration, after Ezhov's purges, not a single prominent Jewish figure remained at liberty in Soviet Jewish society, journalism, culture, or even in the science."[122] Well, it was absolutely not like that, and it

is indeed a gross exaggeration. (Still, the same author, Grigory Aronson, in the same book, only two pages later says summarily about the 1930s, that "the Jews were not deprived of general civil rights … they continued to occupy posts in the state and party apparatus", and "there were quite a few Jews … in the diplomatic corps, in the general staff of the army, and among the professors in the institutions of higher learning…Thus we enter into the year 1939."[123]

The voice of Moscow was that of the People's Artist, Yury Levitan – "the voice of the USSR", that incorruptible prophet of our Truth, the main host of the radio station of the Comintern and a favorite of Stalin. Entire generations grew up, listening to his voice: he read Stalin's speeches and summaries of Sovinformburo [the Soviet Information Bureau], and the famous announcements about the beginning and the end of the war.[124]

In 1936 Samuil Samosud became the main conductor of the Bolshoi Theatre and served on that post for many years. Mikhail Gnesin continued to produce music "in the style of modern European music and in the style of the so-called 'New Jewish music'"; Gnesin's sisters successfully ran the music school, which developed into the outstanding Musical Institute. The ballet of Aleksandr Krein was performed in the Mariinsky and Bolshoi theatres. Well, Krein distinguished himself by his symphony, Rhapsody, that is, a Stalin's speech set to music. Krein's brother and nephew flourished also.[125] A number of brilliant musicians rose to national and later to international fame: Grigory Ginzburg, Emil Gilels, Yakov Zak, Lev Oborin, David Oistrakh, Yakov Flier and many others. Many established theatre directors, theatre and literary critics, and music scholars continued to work without hindrance.

Examining the culture of the 1930s, it is impossible to miss the extraordinary achievements of the songwriter composers. Isaak Dunaevsky, "a founder of genres of operetta and mass song in Soviet music", "composed easily digestible songs … routinely glorifying the Soviet way of life (The March of Merry Lads, 1933; The Song of Kakhovka, 1935; The Song about Homeland, 1936; The Song of Stalin, 1936, etc.). Official propaganda on the arts declared these songs … the embodiment of the thoughts and feelings of millions of Soviet people."[126] Dunaevsky's tunes were used as the identifying melody of Moscow Radio. He was heavily decorated for his service: he was the first of all composers to be awarded the Order of the Red Banner of Labour and elected to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in the notorious year 1937. Later he was also awarded the Order of Lenin. He used to preach to composers that the Soviet people do not need symphonies.[127]

Matvey Blanter and the brothers Daniil and Dmitry Pokrass were famous for their complacent hit song If War Strikes Tomorrow ("we will instantly crush the enemy") and for their earlier hit the Budyonny March. There were many other famous Jewish songwriters and composers in 1930s and later: Oskar Feltsman, Solovyev-Sedoy, Ilya Frenkel, Mikhail Tanich, Igor Shaferan, Yan Frenkel and Vladimir Shainsky, etc. They enjoyed copy numbers in the millions, fame, royalties — come on, who dares to name those celebrities among the oppressed? And after all, alongside the skillfully written songs, how much blaring Soviet

propaganda did they churn out, confusing, brainwashing, and deceiving the public and crippling good taste and feelings?

What about movie industry? The modern Israeli Jewish Encyclopedia states that in the 1930s "the main role of movies was to glorify the successes of socialism; a movie's entertainment value was minimal. Numerous Jewish filmmakers participated in the development of standards of a unified and openly ideological film industry, conservative in form and obsessively didactic. Many of them were already listed in the previous chapter; take, for example, D. Vertov's Symphony of the Donbass, 1931, released immediately after the Industrial Party Trial. Here are a few of the then-celebrated names: F. Ermler (The Coming, The Great Citizen, Virgin Soil Upturned), S. Yutkevich (The Coming, The Miners), the famous Mikhail Romm (Lenin in October, Lenin in 1918), L. Arnshtam (Girlfriends, Friends), I. Trauberg (The Son of Mongolia, The Year 1919), A. Zarkhi and I. Kheifits (Hot Days, Ambassador of the Baltic).[128] Obviously, filmmakers were not persecuted in the 1930s, though many cinematography, production and film distribution managers were arrested; two high-ranking bosses of the central management of the cinema industry, B. Shumyatsky and S. Dukelsky, were even shot.[129]

In the 1930s, Jews clearly comprised a majority among filmmakers. So, who was really the victim – deceived viewers, whose souls were steamrolled with lies and rude didactics, or the filmmakers, who "forged documentaries, biographies and produced pseudo-historical and essentially unimportant propaganda films," characterized by "phony monumentality and inner emptiness"? The Jewish Encyclopedia adds sternly: "Huge numbers of Jewish operators and directors were engaged in making popular science, educational, and documentary films, in the most official sphere of the Soviet cinematography, where adroit editing helped to produce a "genuine documentary" out of a fraud. For example, R. Karmen, did it regularly without scruples."[130] (He was a glorified Soviet director, producer of many documentaries about the civil war in Spain and the Nuremberg Trials; he made "the anniversary-glorifying film The Great Patriotic War", Vietnam, and a film about Cuba; he was a recipient of three USSR State Prizes (the Stalin Prize) and the Lenin Prize; he held the titles of the People's Artist of the USSR and the Hero of the Socialist Labor).[131] Let's not forget filmmaker Konrad Wolf, the brother of the famous Soviet spy, Marcus Wolf.[132]

No, the official Soviet atmosphere of 1930s was absolutely free of ill will toward Jews. And until the war, the overwhelming majority of Soviet Jewry sympathized with the Soviet ideology and sided with the Soviet regime. "There was no Jewish Question indeed in the USSR before the war – or almost none"; then the "open anti-Semites were not yet in charge of newspapers and journals … they did not control personnel departments"[133] (quite the opposite – many such positions were occupied by Jews).

Sure, then Soviet "culture" consisted of "Soviet patriotism," i.e., of producing art in accordance with directives from above. Unfortunately, many Jews were engaged in that pseudo-cultural sphere and some of them even rose to supervise the Russian language

culture. In the early 1930s we see B.M. Volin-Fradkin at the head of the Main Administration for Literary and Publishing Affairs (GlavLit), the organ of official censorship, directing the development of the culture. Many of the GlavLit personnel were Jewish. For example, in GlavLit, from 1932 to 1941 we see A.I. Bendik, who would become the Director of the Book Palace during the war.[134] Emma Kaganova, the spouse of Chekist Pavel Sudoplatov was "trusted to manage the activities of informants among the Ukrainian intelligentsia."[135] After private publishers were abolished, "a significant contribution to the organization and management of Soviet government publishers was made by S. Alyansky, M. Volfson, I. Ionov (Bernshtein), A. Kantorovich, B. Malkin, I. Berite, B. Feldman, and many others."[136] Soon all book publishing was centralized in the State Publishing House and there was no other place for an author to get his work published.

The Jewish presence was also apparent in all branches of the printed propaganda Works of the clumsy caricaturist Boris Efimov could be found in the press everyday (he produced extremely filthy images of Western leaders; for instance, he had portrayed Nicholas II in a crown carrying a rifle, trampling corpses). Every two to three days, sketches of other dirty satirists, like G. Riklin, the piercingly caustic D. Zaslavsky, the adroit Radek, the persistent Sheinin and the brothers Tur, appeared in press. A future writer L. Kassil wrote essays for Izvestiya. There were many others: R. Karmen, T. Tess, Kh. Rappoport, D. Chernomordikov, B. Levin, A. Kantorovich, and Ya. Perelman. These names I found in Izvestiya only, and there were two dozen more major newspapers feeding the public with blatant lies. In addition, there existed a whole sea of ignoble mass propaganda brochures saturated with lies. When they urgently needed a mass propaganda brochure devoted to the Industrial Party Trial (such things were in acute demand for all of the 1930s), one B. Izakson knocked it out under the title: "Crush the viper of intervention!" Diplomat E. Gnedin, the son of Parvus, wrote lying articles about the "incurable wounds of Europe" and the imminent death of the West. He also wrote a rebuttal article, Socialist Labor in the Forests of the Soviet North,in response to Western "slanders" about the allegedly forced labor of camp inmates felling timber. When in the 1950s Gnedin returned from a camp after a long term (though, it appears, not having experienced tree felling himself), he was accepted as a venerable sufferer and no one reminded him of his lies in the past.

In 1929-31 Russian historical science was destroyed; the Archaeological Commission, the Northern Commission, Pushkin House, the Library of the Academy of Sciences were all abolished, traditions were smashed, and prominent Russian historians were sent to rot in camps. (How much did we hear about that destruction?) Third and fourth-rate Russian historians then surged in to occupy the vacant posts and brainwash us for the next half a century. Sure, quite a few Russian slackers made their careers then, but Jewish ones did not miss their chance.

Already in the 1930s, Jews played a prominent role in Soviet science, especially in the most important and technologically-demanding frontiers, and their role was bound to become

even more important in the future. “By the end of 1920s, Jews comprised 13.6% of all scientists in the country; by 1937 their share increased to 17.6%”; in 1939 there were more than 15,000 or 15.7% Jewish scientists and lecturers in the institutions of higher learning.”[137]

In physics, member of the Academy A. F. Ioffe nurtured a highly successful school. As early as 1918, he founded the Physical-Technical Institute in Petrograd. Later, “fifteen affiliated scientific centers were created”; they were headed by Ioffe’s disciples. “His former students worked in many other institutes, in many ways determining the scientific and technological potential of the Soviet Union.”[138] (However, repressions did not bypass them. In 1938, in the Kharkov Physics-Technological Institute, six out of eight heads of departments were arrested: Vaisberg, Gorsky, Landau, Leipunsky, Obreimov, Shubnikov; a seventh—Rueman—was exiled; only Slutskin remained).[139] The name of Semyon Aisikovich, the constructor of Lavochkin fighter aircraft, was long unknown to the public.[140] Names of many other personalities in military industry were kept secret as well. Even now we do not know all of them. For instance, M. Shkud “oversaw development of powerful radio stations,”[141] yet there were surely others, whom we do not know, working on the development of no less powerful jammers.)

Numerous Jewish names in technology, science and its applications prove that the flower of several Jewish generations went into these fields. Flipping through the pages of biographical tomes of the Russian Jewish Encyclopedia, which only lists the Jews who were born or lived in Russia, we see an abundance of successful and gifted people with real accomplishments (which also means the absence of obstacles to career entry and advancement in general).

Of course, scientists had to pay political tribute too. Take, for example, ”the First National Conference for the Planning of Science” in 1931. Academician Ioffe stated that “modern capitalism is no longer capable of a technological revolution,” it is only possible as a result of a social revolution, which has “transformed the once barbaric and backward Russia into the Socialist Union of Republics.” He praised the leadership of the proletariat in science and said that science can be free only under Soviet stewardship. “Militant philosopher” E. Ya. Kolman (“one of main ideologists of Soviet science in the 1930s”; he fulminated against the Moscow school of mathematics) asserted that “we should … introduce labor discipline in the sciences, adopt collective methods, socialist competition, and shock labor methods; he said that science advances “thanks to the proletarian dictatorship,” and that each scientist should study Lenin’s Materialism and Empirico-criticism. Academician A.G. Goldman (Ukraine) enthusiastically chimed in: “The academy now became the leading force in the struggle for the Marxist dialectic in science!”[142]

The Jewish Encyclopedia summarizes: “At the end of 1930s, the role of the Jews in the various spheres of the Soviet life reached its apogee for the entire history of the Soviet regime.” According to the 1939 census, 40% of all economically active Jews were state employees. Around 364,000 were categorized among the intelligentsia. Of them, 106,000

were engineers or technologists, representing 14% of all professionals of this category country-wide; 139,000 were managers at various levels, 7% of all administrators in the USSR; "39,000 doctors, or slightly less than 27% of all doctors; 38,000 teachers, or more than 3% of all teachers; "more than 6,500 writers, journalists, and editors; more than 5,000 actors and filmmakers; more than 6,000 musicians; a little less than 3,000 artists and sculptors; and more than 5,000 lawyers."[143]

In the opinion of the Encyclopedia, such impressive representation by a national minority, even in the context of official internationalism and brotherhood of the peoples of the USSR, created the prerequisites for the backlash by the state."[144]

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During his political career, Stalin often allied with Jewish leaders of the communist party and relied on many Jewish back-benchers. By the mid-1930s he saw in the example of Hitler all the disadvantages of being a self-declared enemy of the Jews. Yet he likely harbored hostility toward them (his daughter's memoirs support this), though even his closest circle was probably unaware of it. However, struggling against the Trotskyites, he, of course, realized this aspect as well — his need to further get rid of the Jewish influence in the party. And, sensing the war, he perhaps was also grasping that "proletarian internationalism" alone would not be sufficient and that the notion of the "homeland," and even the "Homeland", would be much needed.

S. Schwartz lamented about anti-revolutionary transformation of the party as the "unprecedented 'purge' of the ruling party, the virtual destruction of the old party and the establishment of a new communist party under the same name in its place – new in social composition and ideology." From 1937 he also noted a "gradual displacement of Jews from the positions of power in all spheres of public life." "Among the old Bolsheviks who were involved in the activity before the party came to power and especially among those with the pre-revolutionary involvement, the percentage of Jews was noticeably higher than in the party on average; in younger generations, the Jewish representation became even smaller… As a result of the purge, almost all important Jewish communists left the scene."[145] Lazar Kaganovich was the exception. Still, in 1939, after all the massacres, the faithful communist Zemlyachka was made the deputy head of the Soviet of People's Commissars, and S. Dridzo-Lozovsky was assigned the position of Deputy to the Narkom of Foreign Affairs.[146] And yet, in the wider picture, Schwartz's observations are reasonable as was demonstrated above.

S. Schwartz adds that in the second half of 1930s Jews were gradually barred from entering "institutions of higher learning, which were preparing specialists for foreign relations and foreign trade, and were barred from military educational institutions."[147] The famous defector from the USSR, I.S. Guzenko, shared rumors about a secret percentage quota on Jewish admissions to the institutions of higher learning which was enforced from 1939.

In the 1990s they even wrote that Molotov, taking over the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs in the spring of 1939, publicly announced during the general meeting with the personnel that he "will deal with the synagogue here," and that he began firing Jews on the very same day. (Still, Litvinov was quite useful during the war in his role as Soviet ambassador to the U.S. They say that upon his departure from the U.S. in 1943 he even dared to pass a personal letter to Roosevelt suggesting that Stalin had unleashed an anti-Semitic campaign in the USSR).[148]

By the mid-1930s the sympathy of European Jewry toward the USSR had further increased. Trotsky explained it in 1937 on his way to Mexico: "The Jewish intelligentsia … turns to the Comintern not because they are interested in Marxism or Communism, but in search of support against aggressive [German] anti-Semitism."[149] Yet it was this same Comintern that approved the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the pact that dealt a mortal blow to the East European Jewry!

"In September 1939, hundreds of thousands of Polish Jews fled from the advancing German armies, fleeing further and further east and trying to head for the territory occupied by the Red Army…. For the first two months they succeeded because of the favorable attitude of the Soviet authorities. The Germans quite often encouraged this flight." But "at the end of November the Soviet government closed the border."[150]

In different areas of the front things took shape differently: in some areas, the Soviets would not admit Jewish refugees at all; in other places they were welcomed but later sometimes sent back to the Germans. Overall, it is believed that around 300,000 Jews managed to migrate from the Western to the Eastern Poland in the first months of the war, and later the Soviets evacuated them deeper into the USSR. They demanded that Polish Jews register as Soviet citizens, but many of them did not rush to accept Soviet citizenship: after all, they thought, the war would soon be over, and they would return home, or go to America, or to Palestine. (Yet in the eyes of the Soviet regime they thereby immediately fell under the category of "suspected of espionage," especially if they tried to correspond with relatives in Poland).[151] Still, we read in the Chicago Sentinel that the Soviet Union gave refuge to 90% of all European Jewish refugees fleeing from Hitler."[152]

According to the January 1939 census, 3,020,000 Jews lived in the USSR. Now, after occupation of the Baltics, annexation of a part of Poland, and taking in Jewish refugees, approximately two million more Jews were added, giving a total of around 5 million.[153] Before 1939, the Jews were the seventh largest people in the USSR number-wise; now, after annexation of all Western areas, they became the fourth largest people of the USSR, after the three Slavic peoples, Russian, Ukrainian, and Belorussian. "The mutual non-Aggression Pact of 23 August 1939 between the Third Reich and the Soviet Union evoked serious fear about the future of Soviet Jewry, though the policy of the Soviet Union toward its Jewish citizens was not changed." And although there were some reverse deportations, overall,

"the legal status of Jewish population remained unchanged during the 20 months of the Soviet-German collaboration."[154]

With the start of war in Poland, Jewish sympathies finally crystallized and Polish Jews, and the Jewish youth in particular, met the advancing Red Army with exulting enthusiasm. Thus, according to many testimonies (including M. Agursky's one), Polish Jews, like their co-ethnics in Bessarabia, Bukovina and Lithuania, became the main pillar of the Soviet regime, supporting it tooth and nail.

Yet how much did these East European Jews know about what was going on in the USSR?

They unerringly sensed that a catastrophe was rolling at them from Germany, though still not fully or clearly recognized, but undoubtedly a catastrophe. And so the Soviet welcome appeared to them to embody certain salvation.

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Chapter 20: In the camps of GULag

If I haven't been there, it wouldn't be possible for me to compose this chapter.

Before the camps I thought that "one should not notice nationalities", that there are no nationalities, there is only humankind.

But when you are sent into the camp, you find it out: if you are of a lucky nationality then you are a fortunate man. You are provided for. You have survived! But if you are of a *common* nationality – well then, no offence…

Because nationality is perhaps the most important trait that gives a prisoner a chance to be picked into the life-saving corps of *"Idiots"* **[translator note: from Russian "придурок" - a fool or idiot. This is an inmate slang term to denote other inmates who didn't do common labor but managed to obtain positions with easy duties, usually pretending to be incapable of doing hard work because of poor health]**. Every experienced camp inmate can confirm that ethnic proportions among *Idiots* were very different from those in the general camp population. Indeed, there were virtually no Pribalts among Idiots, regardless of their actual number in the camp (and there were many of them); there were always Russians, of course, but in incomparably smaller proportion than in the camp on average (and those were often selected from *orthodox* members of the Party); on the other hand, some others were noticeably concentrated – Jews, Georgians, Armenians; and Azeris also ended there in higher proportions, and, to some extent, Caucasian mountaineers also.

Certainly, none of them can be blamed for that. Every nation in the Gulag did its best crawling to survival, and the smaller and nimbler it was, the easier it was to accomplish. And again, Russians were the very last nation in "their own Russian camps", like they were in the German *Kriegsgefan-genenlagers*.

Yet it is not us who could have blamed them, but it is they – Armenians, Georgians, highlanders, who would have been in their right to ask us: "Why did you establish these camps? Why do you force us to live in your state? Do not hold us and we will not land here and occupy these such attractive *Idiotic* positions! But while we are your prisoners – *a la guerre comme a la guerre*."

But what about Jews? For Fate interwove Russian and Jews, perhaps forever, which is why this book is being written.

Before that, before this very line, there will be readers who have been in the camps and who haven't been, who will be quick to contest the truth of what I say here. They will claim that many Jews were forced to take part in *common* labor activities. They will deny that there were camps where Jews were the majority among *Idiots*. They will indignantly reject that nations in the camps were helping each other selectively, and, therefore, at the expense of others.

Some others will not consider themselves as distinct *"Jews"* at all, perceiving themselves as Russians in everything. Besides, even if there *was* overrepresentation of Jews on key camp

positions, it was absolutely unpremeditated, wasn't it? The selection was exclusively based on merit and personal talents and abilities to do business. Well, who is to blame if Russians lack business talents?

There will be also those who will passionately assert directly opposite: that it was Jews who suffered worst in the camps. This is exactly how it is understood in the West: in Soviet camps nobody suffered as badly as Jews. Among the letters from readers of *Ivan Denisovich* there was one from an anonymous Jew: "You have met innocent Jews who languished in camps with you, and you obviously not at once witnessed their suffering and persecution. They endured double oppression: imprisonment and enmity from the rest of inmates. Tell us about these people!"

And if I wished to *generalize* and state that the life of Jews in camps was especially difficult, then I would be allowed to do so and wouldn't be peppered with admonitions for unjust ethnic generalizations. But in the camps, where I was imprisoned, it was the other way around – the life of Jews, to the extent of possible generalization, *was* easier.

Semen Badash, my campmate from Ekibastuz, recounts in his memoirs how he had managed to settle – later, in a camp at Norilsk – in the medical unit: Max Minz asked a radiologist Laslo Newsbaum to solicit for Badash before a free head of the unit. He was accepted (1). But Badash at least finished three years of medical school before imprisonment. Compare that with other nurses – Genkin, Gorelik, Gurevich (like one of my pals, L. Kopelev from Unzlag) – who never before in their lives had anything to do with medicine.

Some people absolutely seriously write like this: A. Belinkov "was thrown into the most despicable category of *Idiots*…" (and I am tempted to inappropriately add "and languishers" here, though the *"Languishers"* were the social antipodes of *Idiots* and Belinkov never was among the *Languishers*). – "To be thrown into the group of*Idiots*"! – what's an expression! "To be diminished by being accepted into the ranks of gentlemen"? And here goes the justification: "To dig soil? But at the age of 23 he not only never did it – he never saw a shovel in his life". Well then he had no other choice but to become an *Idiot*.

Or read what Levitin-Krasnov wrote about one Pinsky, a literature expert, that he was a nurse in the camp. Which means that he, on the camp scale, has adhered well. However, Levitin presents this as an example of the greatest humiliation possible for a professor of the humanities.

Or take prisoner who survived, Lev Razgon, a journalist and not a medic at all, who was heavily published afterwards. But from his story in "Ogonek" (1988) we find that he used to be a medic in the camp's medical unit, and, moreover, an *unescorted* medic. (From other his stories we can figure out that he also worked as a senior controller at a horrible timber logging station. But there is not a single story from which we can conclude that he ever participated in *common* labor.)

Or a story of Frank Dikler, a Jew from faraway Brazil: he was imprisoned and couldn't speak Russian, of course, and guess what? He had pull in the camp, and he has became a chief of the medical unit's kitchen – a truly magnificent treasure!

Or Alexandr Voronel, who was a "political youngster" when he landed in the camps, says that immediately after getting in the camp, he was "readily assisted… by other Jewish inmates, who had not a slightest idea about my political views". A Jewish inmate, responsible for running the bathhouse (a very important *Idiot* as well), has spotted him instantly and "ordered him to come if he needs any help"; a Jew from prisoner security (also an *Idiot*) told another Jew, a brigadier: "There are two Jewish guys, Hakim, don't allow them to get in trouble". And the brigadier gave them strong protection. "Other thieves, especially "elders", approved him: You are so right, Hakim! You support your own kin! Yet we, Russians, are like wolves to each other"" (3).

And let's not forget that even during camp imprisonment, by virtue of a common stereotype regarding all Jews as businessmen, many of them were getting commercial offers, sometimes even when they didn't actively look for such enterprises. Take, for instance, M. Hafez. He emphatically notes: "What a pity that I can't describe you those camp situations. There are so many rich, beautiful stories! However, the ethical code of a "reliable Jew" seals my mouth. You know even the smallest commercial secret should be kept forever. That's the law of the Tribe" (4).

A Lett Ane Bernstein, one of my witnesses from *Archipelago*, thinks that he managed to survive in the camps only because in times of hardship he asked the Jews for help and that the Jews, judging by his last name and nimble manners, mistook him for their tribesman – and always provided assistance. He says that in all his camps Jews always constituted the upper crust, and that the most important free employees were also Jews (Shulman – head of special department, Greenberg – head of camp station, Kegels – chief mechanic of the factory), and, according to his recollections, they also preferred to select Jewish inmates to staff their units.

This particular Jewish national contract between free bosses and inmates is impossible to overlook. A free Jew was not so stupid to actually see an "Enemy of the People" or an evil character preying on "the people's property" in an imprisoned Jew (unlike what a dumb-headed Russian saw in another Russian). He in the first place saw a suffering tribesman – and I praise them for this sobriety! Those who know about terrific Jewish mutual supportiveness (especially exacerbated by mass deaths of Jews under Hitler) would understand that a free Jewish boss simply could not indifferently watch Jewish prisoners flounder in starvation and die, and not help. But I am unable to imagine a free Russian employee who would save and promote his fellow Russian prisoners to the privileged positions only because of their nationality. Though we have lost 15 millions during collectivization, we are still numerous. You can't care about everyone, and nobody would even think about it.

Sometimes, when such a team of Jewish inmates smoothly bands together and, being no longer impeded by the ferocious struggle for survival, they can engage in extraordinary activities. An engineer named Abram Zisman tells us: "In Novo-Archangelsk camp, in our spare time, [we] decided to count how many Jewish pogroms occurred over the course of Russian history. We managed to excite the curiosity of our camp command on this question (they had a peaceful attitude toward us). The*Nachlag* [camp commander] was captain Gremin (N. Gershel, a Jew, son of a tailor from Zhlobin). He sent an inquiry to the archives of the former Interior Department requesting the necessary information, and after eight

months we received an official reply that … 76 Jewish pogroms occurred from 1811 to 1917 on the territory of Russia with the number of victims estimated at approximately 3,000" (That is, the total number of those who suffered in any way.) The author reminds us that during one six-month period in medieval Spain more than twenty thousand Jews were killed (5).

A plot-like atmosphere emanates from the recollections of Josef Berger, a communist, about a highly-placed snitch Lev Ilyich Inzhir. A former Menshevik, arrested in 1930, he immediately began collaborating with the GPU, fearing reprisals against his family and the loss of his apartment in the center of Moscow. He "helped to prepare the Menshevik trial" of 1931, falsely testified against his best friends, was absolved and immediately appointed as a chief accountant of Belomorstroi. During the *Yezhovschina* he was a chief accountant of the GULag "enjoying the complete trust of his superiors and with connections to the very top NKVD officials". (Inzhir recalled one "Jewish NKVD veteran who interlarded his words with aphorisms from Talmud".) He was arrested later again, this time on the wave of anti-Yezhov purges. However, Inzhir's former colleagues from the GULag favorably arranged his imprisonment. However, at this point he turned into an explicit "snitch and provocateur", and other inmates suspected that the plentiful parcels he was receiving were not from his relatives but directly from the Third Department. Nevertheless, later in 1953 in the Tayshet camp, he was sentenced to an additional jail term, this time being accused of Trotskyism and of concealing his "sympathies for the State of Israel" from the Third Department (6).

Of worldwide infamy, BelBallag absorbed hundreds of thousands of Russian, Ukrainian and Middle Asian peasants between 1931 and 1932. Opening a newspaper issue from August, 1933, dedicated to the completion of the canal [between White and Baltic seas], we find a list of awardees. Lower ranking orders and medals were awarded to concreters, steelfixers, etc, but the highest degree of decoration, the Order of Lenin, was awarded to eight men only, and we can see large photographs of each. Only two of them were actual engineers, the rest were the chief commanders of the canal (according to Stalin's understanding of personal contribution). And whom do we see here? Genrikh Yagoda, head of NKVD. Matvei Berman, head of GULag. Semen Firin, commander of BelBaltlag (by that time he was already the commander of Dmitlag, where the story will later repeat itself). Lazar Kogan, head of construction (later he will serve the same function at Volgocanal). Jacob Rapoport, deputy head of construction. Naftaly Frenkel, chief manager of the labor force of Belomorstroi (and the evil demon of the whole Archipelago) (7).

And all their portraits were enlarged and reprinted again in the solemnly shameful book *Belomorcanal* (8) – a book of huge Scriptural size, like some revelation anticipating advent of the Millenarian Kingdom.

And then I reproduced these six portraits of villains in *Archipelago*, borrowing them from their own exhibition and without any prior editing, showing everybody who was originally displayed. Oh my God, what a worldwide rage has surged! *How dared I?! This is anti-Semitism!* I am a branded and screwed anti-Semite. At best, to reproduce these portraits was "national egotism" – i.e. Russian egotism! And they dared to say it despite what follows immediately on the next pages of *Archipelago*: how docilely "Kulak" lads were freezing to death under their barrows.

One wonders, where were their eyes in 1933 when it was printed for the very first time? Why weren't they so indignant then?

Let me repeat what I professed once to the Bolsheviks: one should be ashamed of hideosity not when it is disclosed to public but when it is done.

A particular conundrum exists with respect to the personality of Naftaly Frenkel, that tireless demon of *Archipelago*: how to explain his strange return from Turkey in 1920's? He successfully got away from Russia with all his capitals after the first harbingers of revolution. In Turkey, he attained a secure, rich and unconstrained social standing, and he never harbored any Communist ideas. And yet he returned? To come back and become a toy for the GPU and for Stalin, to spend several years in imprisonment himself, but in return to accomplish the most ruthless oppression of imprisoned engineers and the extermination of hundreds of thousands of the "de-Kulakized"? What could have motivated his insatiable evil heart? I am unable to imagine any possible reason except vengeance toward Russia. If anyone can provide an alternative explanation, please do so (9).

What else could be revealed by someone with a thorough understanding of the structure of the camp command? The head of 1st Department of Belomorstroi was one Wolf; the head of the Dmitrov section of Volgocanal was Bovshover. The finance division of Belomorstroi was headed by L. Berenzon, his deputies were A. Dorfman, the already mentioned Inzhir, Loevetsky, Kagner, Angert. And how many of the other humbler posts remain unmentioned? Is it really reasonable to suppose that Jews were digging soil with shovels and racing their hand-barrows and dying under those barrows from exhaustion and emaciation? Well, view it as you wish. A. P. Skripnikova and D. P. Vitkovsky, who were there, told me that Jews were overrepresented among *Idiots* during construction of Belomorcanal, and they did not roll barrows and did not die under them.

And you could find highly-placed Jewish commanders not only at BelBaltlag. Construction of the Kotlas-Vorkuta railroad was headed by Moroz (his son married Svetlana Stalina); the special officer-in-charge of GULag in the Far East was Grach. These are only a few of the names, which resurfaced accidentally. If a former inmate Thomas Sgovio, an American national, didn't write to me, I wouldn't be aware about the head of the Chai-Uryinsk Mining Administration on Kolyma between 1943-44 (at the depths of the Patriotic War): "Half-colonel Arm was a tall black-haired Jew with a terrible reputation… His orderly man was selling ethanol to everybody, 50 grams for 50 rubles. Arm had his own personal tutor of English – a young American, arrested in Karelia. His wife was paid a salary for an accountant's position, but she didn't work – her job was actually performed by an inmate in the office" (a common practice revealing how families of GULag commanders used to have additional incomes).

Or take another case: during the age of *glasnost,* one Soviet newspaper published a story about the dreadful GULag administration that built a tunnel between Sakhalin and the mainland. It was called the "Trust of Arais" (10). Who was that comrade Arais? I have no idea. But how many perished in his mines and in the unfinished tunnel?

Sure, I knew a number of Jews (they were my friends) who carried all the hardships of common labor. In *Archipelago*, I described a young man, Boris Gammerov, who quickly

found his death in the camp. (While his friend, the writer Ingal, was made an accountant from the very first day in the camp, although his knowledge of arithmetic was very poor.) I knew Volodya Gershuni, an irreconcilable and incorruptible man. I knew Jog Masamed, who did common labor in the hard labor camp at Ekibastuz *on principle*, though he was called upon to join the *Idiots*. Besides, I would like to list here a teacher Tatyana Moiseevna Falike, who spent 10 years drudging, she said, like a beast of burden. And I also would like to name here a geneticist Vladimir Efroimson, who spent 13 out of his 36 months of imprisonment (one out of his two terms) doing common labor. He also did it on principle, though he also had better options. Relying on parcels from home (one cannot blame him for that), he picked the hand-barrow precisely because there were many Jews from Moscow in that Jezkazgan camp, and they were used to settling well, while Efroimson wanted to dispel any grudge toward Jews, which was naturally emerging among inmates. And what did his brigade think about his behavior? – "He is a black sheep among Jews; would a real Jew roll a barrow?" He was similarly ridiculed by Jewish *Idiots* who felt annoyed that he "flaunted himself" to reproach them. In the same vein, another Jew, Jacov Davydovich Grodzensky, who also *beavered in the common* category, was judged by others: "Is he really a Jew?"

It is so symbolic! Both Efroimson and Grodzenskiy did those right and best things, which could be only motivated by the noblest of Jewish appeals, to honestly share the common lot, and they were not understood by either side! They are always difficult and derided – the paths of austerity and dedication, the only ones that can save humanity.

I try not to overlook such examples, because all my hopes depend on them.

Let's add here a valiant Gersh Keller, one of the leaders of Kengir uprising in 1954 (he was 30 years old when executed). I also read about Yitzhak Kaganov, commander of an artillery squadron during the Soviet-German war. In 1948, he was sentenced to 25 years for Zionism. During 7 years of imprisonment he wrote 480 pieces of poetry in Hebrew, which he memorized without writing them down (11).

During his third trial (July 10, 1978), after already serving two terms, Alexander Ginsburg, was asked a question "What is your nationality?" and replied: "Inmate!" That was a worthy and serious response, and it angered the tribunal. But he deserved it for his work for the Russian Public Relief Fund, which provided assistance to families of political prisoners of *all nationalities*, and by his manly vocation. This is what we are – a genuine breed of prisoners, regardless of nationality.

However, my camps were different, – spanning from the "great" Belomor to the tiny 121st camp district of the 15th OLP of Moscow's UITLK (which left behind a not inconspicuous semi-circular building at Kaluga's gate in Moscow). Out there, our entire life was directed and trampled by three leading *Idiots*: Solomon Solomonov, a chief accountant; David Burstein, first an "educator" and later a work-assigning clerk; and Isaac Bershader. (Earlier, in exactly the same way, Solomonov and Bershader ruled over the camp at the Moscow Highway Institute, MHI.) Note that all this happened under auspices of a Russian camp commander, one ensign Mironov.

All three of them came up before my eyes, and to get positions for them, in each case their Russian predecessors were instantly removed from the posts. Solomonov was sent in first;

he confidently seized a proper position and quickly got on the right side of the ensign. (I think, using food and money from outside.) Soon after that the wretched Bershader was sent in from MHI with an accompanying note "to use him only in the common labor category" (a quite unusual situation for a domestic criminal, which probably meant substantial delinquency). He was about fifty years old, short, fat, with a baleful glare. He walked around condescendingly inspecting our living quarters, with the look of a general from the head department.

The senior proctor asked him: "What is your specialty?" – "Storekeeper". – "There is no such specialty" – "Well, I am a storekeeper". – "Anyway, you are going to work in the common labor brigade". For two days he was sent there. Shrugging his shoulders, he went out, and, upon entering the work zone, he used to seat himself on a stone and rest respectably. The brigadier would have hit him, but he quailed – the newcomer was so self-confident, that anyone could sense power behind him. The camp's storekeeper, Sevastyanov, was depressed as well. For two years he was in charge of the combined provision and sundry store. He was firmly established and lived on good terms with the brass, but now he was chilled: everything is already settled! Bershader is a "storekeeper by specialty"!

Then the medical unit discharged Bershader from the labor duties on grounds of "poor health" and after that he rested in the living quarters. Meanwhile, he probably got something from outside. And within less than a week Sevastyanov was removed from his post, and Bershader was made a storekeeper (with the assistance of Solomonov). However, at this point it was found that the physical labor of pouring grain and rearranging boots, which was done by Sevastyanov single-handedly, was also contraindicated for Bershader. So he was given a henchman, and Solomonov's bookkeeping office enlisted the latter as service personnel. But it was still not a sufficiently abundant life. The best looking proudest woman of the camp, the swan-like lieutenant-sniper M. was bent to his will and forced to visit him in his store-room in the evenings. After Burstein showed himself in the camp, he arranged to have another camp beauty, A. S., to come to his cubicle.

Is it difficult to read this? But they were by no means troubled how it looked from outside. It even seemed as if they thickened the impression on purpose. And how many such little camps with similar establishments were there all across the Archipelago?

And did Russian *Idiots* behave in the same way, unrestrained and insanely!? Yes. But within every other nation it was perceived socially, like an eternal strain between rich and poor, lord and servant. However, when an alien emerges as a "master over life and death" it further adds to the heavy resentment. It might appear strange – isn't it all the same for a worthless negligible, crushed, and doomed camp dweller surviving at one of his dying stages? isn't it all the same who exactly seizes the power inside the camp and celebrates crow's picnics over his trench-grave? As it turns out, it is not. These things have been etched into my memory inerasably.

In my play *Republic of Labor*, I presented some of the events that happened in that camp on Bolshaya Kaluzhskaya 30. Understanding the impossibility of depicting everything like it was in reality, because it would be inevitably considered as incitement of anti-Jewish sentiment (as if that trio of Jews was not inflaming it in real life, caring little about consequences) I withheld the abominably greedy Bershader. I concealed Burstein. I recomposed the profiteer

Rosa Kalikman into an amorphous Bella of eastern origin, and retained the only Jew, accountant Solomonov, exactly like he was in life.

So, what about my loyal Jewish friends after they perused the play? The play aroused extraordinarily passionate protests from V. L. Teush. He read it not immediately but when Sovremennik had already decided to stage it in 1962, so the question was far from scholarly. The Teushes were deeply injured by the figure of Solomonov. They thought it was dishonest and unjust to show such a Jew (despite that in the real life, in the camp, he was exactly as I showed him) in the age of oppression of Jews. (But then, it appears to me that such age is *everlasting*? When have our Jews *not* been oppressed?) Teush was alarmed and extremely agitated, and put forward an ultimatum that if I did not remove or at least soften up the image of Solomonov, then all our friendship will be ruined and he and his wife will no longer be able to keep my manuscripts. Moreover, they prophesized that my very name will be irretrievably lost and blemished if I leave Solomonov in the play. Why not to make him a Russian? They were astonished. Is it so important that he be a Jew? (But if it doesn't matter, why did Solomonov select Jews to be *Idiots*?)

I took a chill pill: a sudden censorial ban, no less weighty than the official Soviet prohibition, had emerged from an unanticipated direction. However, the situation was soon resolved by the official prohibition forbidding Sovremennik to stage the piece.

And there was another objection from Teush: "Your Solomonov has anything but Jewish personality. A Jew always behaves discreetly, cautiously, suppliantly, and even cunningly, but from where comes this pushy impudence of jubilant force? This is not true, it cannot happen like this!"

However, I remember not this Solomonov alone, and it was exactly like that! I saw many things in the 1920's and 1930's in Rostov-on-Don. And Frenkel acted similarly, according to the recollections of surviving engineers. Such a slip of a triumphant power into insolence and arrogance is the most repelling thing for those around. Sure, it is usually behavior of the worst and rudest – but this is what becomes imprinted in memory. (Likewise the Russian image is soiled by the obscenities of our villains.)

All these blandishments and appeals to avoid writing about the things like they were – are undistinguishable from what we heard from the highest Soviet tribunes: about anti-defamation, about socialist realism – to write like it should be, not like it was.

As if a creator is capable of forgetting or creating his past anew! As if the full truth can be written in parts, including only what is pleasing, secure and popular.

And how meticulously all the Jewish characters in my books were analyzed with every personal feature weighted on apothecary scales. But the astonishing story of Grigory M., who did not deliver the order to retreat to a dying regiment because he was frightened (*Archipelago GULag*, v. 6, Ch. 6) – was not noticed. It was passed over without a single word! And *Ivan Denisovich* added insult to injury: there were such sophisticated sufferers but I put forward a boor!

For instance, during Gorbachev's *glasnost*, emboldened Asir Sandler published his camp memoirs. "After first perusal, I emphatically rejected *One Day In The Life Of Ivan Denisovich*… the main personage was Ivan Denisovich, a man with minimal spiritual needs, focused only on his mundane troubles" – and Solzhenitsyn turned him into the national image… (Exactly like all well-meaning communists were grumbling at that time!) While "[Solzhenitsyn] preferred not to notice the true intelligentsia, the determinant of domestic culture and science". Sandler was discussing this with Miron Markovich Etlis (both used to be *Idiots* in medical unit). And Etlis added: "The story is significantly distorted, placed upside down". "Solzhenitsyn failed to emphasize …the intelligent part of our contingent"… Self-centered reflections [of Ivan Denisovich] about himself… that patience… that pseudo-Christian attitude toward others". And in 1964 Sandler was lucky to relieve his feelings in conversation with Ehrenburg himself. And the latter affirmatively nodded when Sandler mentioned his "extremely negative" feeling toward my novelette (12).

However, not a single Jew reproached me that Ivan Denisovich, in essence, attends to Cesar Markovich as a servant, albeit with good feelings.

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Chapter 21: During the Soviet-German War

After Kristallnacht (November 1938) the German Jews lost their last illusions about the mortal danger they were facing. With Hitler's campaign in Poland, the deadly storm headed East. Yet nobody expected that the beginning of the Soviet-German War would move Nazi politics to a new level, toward total physical extermination of Jews.

While they naturally expected all kinds of hardship from the German conquest, Soviet Jews could not envision the indiscriminate mass killings of men and women of all ages – one cannot foresee such things. Thus the terrible and inescapable fate befell those who remained in the German-occupied territories without a chance to resist. Lives ended abruptly. But before their death, they had to pass through either initial forced relocation to a Jewish ghetto, or a forced labor camp, or to gas vans, or through digging one's own grave and stripping before execution.

The Russian Jewish Encyclopedia gives many names of the Russian Jews who fell victims to the Jewish Catastrophe; it names those who perished in Rostov, Simferopol, Odessa, Minsk, Belostok, Kaunas, and Narva. There were prominent people among them. The famous historian S.M. Dubnov spent the entire inter-war period in exile. He left Berlin for Riga after Hitler took power. He was arrested during the German occupation and placed in a ghetto; "in December 1941 he was included into a column of those to be executed"."From Vilna, historian Dina Joffe and director of the Jewish Gymnasium Joseph Yashunskiy were sent to concentration camps (both were killed in Treblinka in 1943). Rabbi Shmuel Bespalov, head of the Hasidim movement in Bobruisk, was shot in 1941 when the city was captured by the Germans. Cantor Gershon Sirota, whose performance had once "caught the attention of Nicholas II" and who performed yearly in St. Petersburg and Moscow, died in 1941 in Warsaw. There were two brothers Paul and Vladimir Mintz: Paul, the elder, was a prominent Latvian politician, "the only Jew in the government of Latvia". Vladimir was a surgeon, who had been entrusted with the treatment of Lenin in 1918 after the assassination attempt. From 1920 he lived in Latvia. In 1940 the Soviet occupation authorities arrested Paul Mintz and placed him in a camp in Krasnoyarsk Krai, where he died early on. The younger brother lived in Riga and was not touched. He died in 1945 at Büchenwald. Sabina Shpilreyn, a doctor of medicine, psychoanalyst and a close colleague of Carl Jung, returned to Russia in 1923 after working in clinics in Zurich, Munich, Berlin and Geneva;in 1942 she was shot along with other Jews by Germans in her native Rostov-on-Don. (In Chapter 19, we wrote about the deaths of her three scientist brothers during Stalin's terror.)

Yet many were saved from death by evacuation in 1941 and 1942. Various Jewish wartime and postwar sources do not doubt the dynamism of this evacuation. For example, in *The Jewish World,* a book written in 1944, one can read: "The Soviet authorities were fully aware that the Jews were the most endangered part of the population, and despite the acute military needs in transport, thousands of trains were provided for their evacuation. … In many cities … Jews were evacuated first", although the author believes that the statement of the Jewish writer David Bergelson that "approximately 80% of Jews were successfully evacuated"[1] is an exaggeration. Bergelson wrote: "In Chernigov, the pre-war Jewish population was estimated at 70,000 people and only 10,000 of them remained by the time the Germans arrived. … In Dnepropetrovsk, out of the original Jewish population of 100,000

only 30,000 remained when the Germans took the city. In Zhitomir, out of 50,000 Jews, no less than 44,000 left."[2] In the Summer 1946 issue of the bulletin, *Hayasa* E.M. Kulisher wrote: "There is no doubt that the Soviet authorities took special measures to evacuate the Jewish population or to facilitate its unassisted flight. Along with the state personnel and industrial workers, Jews were given priority [in the evacuation] … The Soviet authorities provided thousands of trains specifically for the evacuation of Jews."[3] Also, as a safer measure to avoid bombing raids, Jews were evacuated by thousands of haywagons, taken from kolkhozes and sovkhozes [collective farms] and driven over to railway junctions in the rear. B.T. Goldberg, a son-in-law of Sholem Aleichem and then a correspondent for the Jewish newspaper *Der Tog* from New York, after a 1946-1947 winter trip to the Soviet Union wrote an article about the wartime evacuation of Jews (*Der Tog*, February 21, 1947). His sources in Ukraine, "Jews and Christians, the military and evacuees, all stated that the policy of the authorities was to give the Jews a preference during evacuation, to save as many of them as possible so that the Nazis would not destroy them."[4] And Moshe Kaganovich, a former Soviet partisan, in his by then foreign memoirs (1948) confirms that the Soviet government provided for the evacuation of Jews all available vehicles in addition to trains, including trains of haywagons – and the orders were to evacuate "first and foremost the citizens of Jewish nationality from the areas threatened by the enemy".(Note that S. Schwartz and later researchers dispute the existence of such orders, as well as the general policy of Soviet authorities to evacuate Jews "as such."[5])

Nevertheless, both earlier and later sources provide fairly consistent estimates of the number of Jews who were evacuated or fled without assistance from the German-occupied territories. Official Soviet figures are not available; all researchers complain that the contemporaneous statistics are at best approximate. Let us rely then on the works of the last decade. A demographer M. Kupovetskiy, who used formerly unavailable archival materials and novel techniques of analysis, offers the following assessment. According to the 1939 census, 3,028,538 Jews lived in the USSR within its old (that is, pre-1939-1940) boundaries. With some corrections to this figure and taking into account the rate of natural increase of the Jewish population from September 1939 to June 1941 (he analyzed each territory separately), this researcher suggests that at the outbreak of the war approximately 3,080,000 Jews resided within the old USSR borders. Of these, 900,000 resided in the territories which would not be occupied by Germans, and at the beginning of the war 2,180, 000 Jews ("Eastern Jews")[6] resided in the territories later occupied by the Germans. "There is no exact data regarding the number of Jews who fled or were evacuated to the East before the German occupation. Though based on some studies …, we know that approximately 1,000,000 -1,100,000 Jews managed to escape from the Eastern regions later occupied by Germans".[7]

There was a different situation in the territories incorporated into the Soviet Union only in 1939-1940, and which were rapidly captured by the Germans at the start of the "Blitzkreig". The lightning-speed German attack allowed almost no chance for escape; meanwhile the Jewish population of these "buffer" zones numbered 1,885,000 ("Western Jews") in June 1941.[8] And "only a small number of these Jews managed to escape or were evacuated. It is believed that the number is … about 10-12 percent."[9]

Thus, within the new borders of the USSR, by the most optimistic assessments, approximately 2,226,000 Jews (2,000,000 Eastern, 226,000 Western Jews) escaped the German occupation and 2,739,000 Jews (1,080,000 Easterners and 1,659,000 Westerners) remained in the occupied territories.

Evacuees and refugees from the occupied and threatened territories were sent deep into the rear, "with the majority of Jews resettled beyond the Ural Mountains, in particular in Western Siberia and also in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan".[10] The materials of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee (EAK) contain the following statement: "At the beginning of the Patriotic War about one and half million Jews were evacuated to Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and other Central Asian Republics."[11] This figure does not include the Volga, the Ural and the Siberian regions. (However, the *Jewish Encyclopedia* argues that "a 1,500,000 figure" is a great exaggeration."[12]) Still, there was no organized evacuation into Birobidzhan, and no individual refugees relocated there, although, because of the collapse of Jewish kolkhozes, the vacated housing there could accommodate up to 11,000 families.[13] At the same time, "the Jewish colonists in the Crimea were evacuated so much ahead of time that they were able to take with them all livestock and farm implements"; moreover, "it is well-known that in the spring of 1942, Jewish colonists from Ukraine established kolkhozes in the Volga region" How? Well, the author calls it the "irony of Nemesis": they were installed in place of German colonists who were exiled from the German Republic of the Volga by Soviet government order starting on August 28, 1941.[14]

As already noted, all the cited wartime and postwar sources agree in recognizing the energy and the scale of the organized evacuation of Jews from the advancing German army. But the later sources, from the end of the 1940s, began to challenge this. For example, we read in a 1960s source: "*a planned evacuation of Jews as the most endangered part of the population did not take place anywhere in Russia*" (italicized as in the source).[15] And twenty years later we read this: after the German invasion of the Soviet Union, "contrary to the rumors that the government allegedly evacuated Jews from the areas under imminent threat of German occupation, no such measures had ever taken place. … the Jews were abandoned to their fate. When applied to the citizen of Jewish nationality, the celebrated `proletarian internationalism´ was a dead letter".[16] This statement is completely unfair.

Still, even those Jewish writers, who deny the "beneficence" of the government with respect to Jewish evacuation, do recognize its magnitude. "Due to the specific social structure of the Jewish population, the percentage of Jews among the evacuees should have been much higher than the percentage of Jews in the urban population".[17] And indeed it was. The Evacuation Council was established on June 24, 1941, just two days after the German invasion (Shvernik was the chairman and Kosygin and Pervukhin were his deputies) .Its priorities were announced as the following: to evacuate first and foremost the state and party agencies with personnel, industries, and raw materials along with the workers of evacuated plants and their families, and young people of conscription age. Between the beginning of the war and November 1941, around 12 million people were evacuated from the threatened areas to the rear.[18] This number included, as we have seen, 1,000,000 to 1,100,000 Eastern Jews and more than 200,000 Western Jews from the soon-to-be-occupied areas. In addition, we must add to this figure a substantial number of Jews among the people evacuated from the cities and regions of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist

Republic (RSFSR, that is, Russia proper) that never fell to the Germans (in particular, those from Moscow and Leningrad). Solomon Schwartz states: "The general evacuation of state agencies and industrial enterprises with a significant portion of their staff (often with families) was in many places very extensive. Thanks to the social structure of Ukrainian Jewry with a significant percentages of Jews among the middle and top civil servants, including the academic and technical intelligentsia and the substantial proportion of Jewish workers in Ukrainian heavy industry, the share of Jews among the evacuees was larger than their share in the urban (and even more than in the total) population."[19]

The same was true for Byelorussia. In the 1920s and early 1930s it was almost exclusively Jews, both young and old, who studied at "various courses, literacy classes, in day schools, evening schools and shift schools. … This enabled the poor from Jewish villages to join the ranks of industrial workers. Constituting only 8.9% of the population of Byelorussia, Jews accounted for 36% of the industrial workers of the republic in 1930."[20]

"The rise of the percentage of Jews among the evacuees", continues S. Schwartz, "was also facilitated by the fact that for many employees and workers the evacuation was not mandatory. … Therefore, many, mostly non-Jews, remained were they were." Thus, even the Jews, "who did not fit the criteria for mandatory evacuation … had better chances to evacuate".[21] However, the author also notes that "no government orders or instructions on the evacuation specifically of Jews or reports about it ever appeared in the Soviet press". "There simply were no orders regarding the evacuation of Jews specifically. It means that there was no purposeful evacuation of Jews."[22]

Keeping in mind the Soviet reality, this conclusion seems ill grounded and, in any case, formalistic. Indeed, reports about mass evacuation of the Jews did not appear in the Soviet press. It is easy to understand why. First, after the pact with Germany, the Soviet Union suppressed information about Hitler's policies towards Jews, and when the war broke out, the bulk of the Soviet population did not know about the mortal danger the German invasion posed for Jews. Second, and this was probably the more-important factor – German propaganda vigorously denounced "Judeo-Bolshevism" and the Soviet leadership undoubtedly realized that they gave a solid foundation to this propaganda during the 1920s and 1930s, so how could they now declare openly and loudly that the *foremost* government priority must be to save Jews? This could only have been seen as playing into Hitler's hands.

Therefore, there were no public announcements that among the evacuees "Jews were over-represented". "The evacuation orders did not mention Jews", yet "during the evacuation the Jews were not discriminated" against[23]; on the contrary they were evacuated by all available means, but in silence, without press coverage inside the USSR. However, propaganda for foreign consumption was a different matter. For example, in December 1941, after repulsing the German onslaught on Moscow, Radio Moscow - not in the Russian language, of course, but "in Polish", and on "the next day, five more times in German, compared the successful Russian winter counteroffensive with the Maccabean miracle" and told the German-speaking listeners repeatedly that "precisely during Hanukkah week", the 134th Nuremberg Division, named after the city "where the racial legislation originated" was destroyed.[24] In 1941- 42 the Soviet authorities readily permitted worshippers to overfill synagogues in Moscow, Leningrad, and Kharkov and to openly celebrate the Jewish Passover of 1942.[25]

We cannot say that the domestic Soviet press treated German atrocities with silence. Ilya Ehrenburg and others (like the journalist Kriger) got the go-ahead to maintain and inflame hatred towards Germans throughout the entire war and not without mentioning the burning topic of Jewish suffering, yet without a special stress on it. Throughout the war Ehrenburg thundered, that "the German is a beast by his nature", calling for "not sparing even unborn Fascists" (meaning the murder of pregnant German women), and he was checked only at the very end, when the war reached the territory of Germany and it became clear that the Army had embraced only too well the party line of unbridled revenge against all Germans.

However these is no doubt that the Nazi policy of extermination of the Jews, its predetermination and scope, was not sufficiently covered by the Soviet press, so that even the Jewish masses in the Soviet Union could hardly realize the extent of their danger. Indeed, during the entire war, there were few public statements about the fate of Jews under German occupation. Stalin in his speech on Nov. 6, 1941 (the 24th anniversary of the October Revolution) said: "The Nazis are … as eager to organize medieval Jewish pogroms as the Tsarist regime was. The Nazi Party is the party … of medieval reaction and the Black-Hundred pogroms."[26] "As far as we know", an Israeli historian writes, "it was the only case during the entire war when Stalin publicly mentioned the Jews".[27] On January 6, 1942, in a note of the Narkomindel [People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs] composed by Molotov and addressed to all states that maintained diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, the Jews are mentioned as one of many suffering Soviet nationalities, and shootings of Jews in Kiev, Lvov, Odessa, Kamenetz-Podolsk, Dnepropetrovsk, Mariupol, Kerch were highlighted and the numbers of victims listed. "The terrible massacre and pogroms were inflicted by German invaders in Kiev, the capital of Ukraine. … A significant number of Jews, including women and children, were rounded up; before the execution all of them were stripped naked and beaten and then … shot by sub-machine guns. Many mass murders occurred … in other Ukrainian cities, and these bloody executions were directed in particular against unarmed and defenseless Jews from the working class."[28] On December 19, 1942, the Soviet government issued a declaration that mentioned Hitler's "special plan for total extermination of the Jewish population in the occupied territories of Europe" and in Germany itself; "although relatively small, the Jewish minority of the Soviet population … suffered particularly hard from the savage bloodthirstiness of the Nazi monsters". But some sources point out that this declaration was somewhat forced; it came out two days after a similar declaration was made by the western Allies, and it was not republished in the Soviet press as was always done during newspaper campaigns. In 1943, out of seven reports of the Extraordinary State Commission for investigation of Nazi atrocities (such as extermination of Soviet prisoners of war and the destruction of cultural artifacts of our country), only one report referred to murders of Jews – in the Stavropol region, near Mineralnye Vody.[29] And in March 1944 in Kiev, while making a speech about the suffering endured by Ukrainians under occupation, Khrushchev "*did not mention Jews at all*"[30].

Probably this is true. Indeed, the Soviet masses did not realize the scale of the Jewish Catastrophe. Overall, this was our common fate – to live under the impenetrable shell of the USSR and be ignorant of what was happening in the outside world. However, Soviet Jews could not be all that unaware about the events in Germany. "In the mid-thirties the Soviet Press wrote a lot about German anti-Semitism… A novel by Leon Feichtwanger *The Oppenheim Family* and the movie based on the book, as well as another movie, *Professor*

Mamlock, clearly demonstrated the dangers that Jews were facing."[31] Following the pogroms of Kristallnacht, *Pravda* published an editorial "The Fascist Butchers and Cannibals" in which it strongly condemned the Nazis: "The whole civilized world watches with disgust and indignation the vicious massacre of the defenseless Jewish population by German fascists. … [With the same feelings] the Soviet people watch the dirty and bloody events in Germany. … In the Soviet Union, along with the capitalists and landowners, all sources of anti-Semitism had been wiped out."[32] Then, throughout the whole November, *Pravda* printed daily on its front pages reports such as "Jewish pogroms in Germany", "Beastly vengeance on Jews", "The wave of protests around the world against the atrocities of the fascist thugs". Protest rallies against anti-Jewish policies of Hitler were held in Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Tbilisi, Minsk, Sverdlovsk, and Stalin. *Pravda* published a detailed account of the town hall meeting of the Moscow intelligentsia in the Great Hall of the Conservatory, with speeches given by A.N. Tolstoy, A. Korneychuk, L. Sobolev; People's Artists [a Soviet title signifying prominence in the Arts] A.B. Goldenweiser and S.M. Mikhoels, and also the text of a resolution adopted at the meeting: "We, the representatives of the Moscow intelligentsia … raise our voice in outrage and condemnation against the Nazi atrocities and inhuman acts of violence against the defenseless Jewish population of Germany. The fascists beat up, maim, rape, kill and burn alive in broad daylight people who are guilty only of belonging to the Jewish nation."[33] The next day, on November 29, under the headline "Soviet intelligentsia is outraged by Jewish pogroms in Germany", *Pravda* produced the full coverage of rallies in other Soviet cities.

However, from the moment of the signing of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact in August of 1939, not only criticism of Nazi policies but also any information about persecution of the Jews in European countries under German control vanished from the Soviet press. "A lot of messages … were reaching the Soviet Union through various channels - intelligence, embassies, Soviet journalists. … An important source of information… was Jewish refugees who managed to cross the Soviet border. However, the Soviet media, including the Jewish press, maintained silence."[34]

"When the Soviet-German War started and the topic of Nazi anti-Semitism was raised again, many Jews considered it to be propaganda", argues a modern scholar, relying on the testimonies of the Catastrophe survivors, gathered over a half of century. "Many Jews relied on their own life experience rather than on radio, books and newspapers. The image of Germans did not change in the minds of most Jews since WWI. And back then the Jews considered the German regime to be one of the most tolerant to them."[35] "Many Jews remembered, that during the German occupation in 1918, the Germans treated Jews better than they treated the rest of the local population, and so the Jews were reassured."[36] As a result, "in 1941, a significant number of Jews remained in the occupied territories voluntarily". And even in 1942, "according to the stories of witnesses… the Jews in Voronezh, Rostov, Krasnodar, and other cities waited for the front to roll through their city and hoped to continue their work as doctors and teachers, tailors and cobblers, which they believed were always needed…. The Jews could not or would not evacuate for purely material reasons as well."[37]

While the Soviet press and radio censored the information about the atrocities committed by the occupiers against the Jews, the Yiddish newspaper *Einigkeit* ("Unity"), the official

publication of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee (EAK), was allowed to write about it openly from the summer of 1942. Apparently, the first step in the establishment of EAK was a radio-meeting in August 1941of "representatives of the Jewish people" (S. Mikhoels, P. Marques, J. Ohrenburg, S. Marshak, S. Eisenstein and other celebrities participated.) For propaganda purposes, it was broadcast to the US and other Allied countries. "The effect on the Western public surpassed the most optimistic expectations of Moscow. … In the Allied countries the Jewish organizations sprang up to raise funds for the needs of the Red Army." Their success prompted the Kremlin to establish a permanent Jewish Committee in the Soviet Union. "Thus began the seven-year-long cooperation of the Soviet authorities with global Zionism."[38]

The development of the Committee was a difficult process, heavily dependent on the attitudes of government. In September 1941, an influential former member of the Bund, Henryk Ehrlich, was released from the prison to lead that organization. In 1917, Ehrlich had been a member of the notorious and then omnipotent Executive Committee of the Petrosoviet. Later, he emigrated to Poland where he was captured by the Soviets in 1939. He and his comrade, Alter, who also used to be a member of the Bund and was also a native of Poland, began preparing a project that aimed to mobilize international Jewish opinion, with heavier participation of foreign rather than Soviet Jews. "Polish Bund members were intoxicated by their freedom… and increasingly acted audaciously. Evacuated to Kuibyshev [Samara] along with the metropolitan bureaucracy, they contacted Western diplomatic representatives, who were relocated there as well,… suggesting, in particular, to form a Jewish Legion in the USA to fight on the Soviet-German front". "The things have gone so far that the members of the Polish Bund … began planning a trip to the West on their own". In addition, both Bund activists "presumptuously assumed (and did not hide it) that they could liberally reform the Soviet political system". In December 1941, both overreaching leaders of the Committee were arrested (Ehrlich hanged himself in prison; Alter was shot).[39]

Yet during the spring of 1942, the project of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee was revived, and a meeting "of the representatives of Jewish people" was called forth again. A Committee was elected, although this time exclusively from Soviet Jews. Solomon Mikhoels became its Chairman and Shakhno Epstein, "Stalin's eye `in Jewish affairs´ and a former fanatical Bundist and later a fanatical Chekist, became its Executive Secretary". Among others, its members were authors David Bergelson, Peretz Markish, Leib Kvitko, and Der Nistor; scientists Lina Shtern and Frumkin, a member of the Academy. Poet Itzik Fefer became the Vice President. (The latter was a former Trotskyite who was pardoned because he composed odes dedicated to Stalin; he was "an important NKVD agent", and, as a "proven secret agent", he was entrusted with a trip to the West.[41]) The task of this Committee was the same: to influence international public opinion, and "to appeal to the 'Jews all over the world' but in practice it appealed primarily to the American Jews",[42] building up sympathy and raising financial aid for the Soviet Union. (And it was the main reason for Mikhoels' and Fefer's trip to the United States in summer 1943, which coincided with the dissolution of Comintern. It was a roaring success, triggering rallies in 14 cities across the US: 50,000 people rallied in New York City alone. Mikhoels and Fefer were received by former Zionist leader Chaim Weizmann and by Albert Einstein.[43]) Yet behind the scenes the Committee was managed by Lozovskiy-Dridzo, the Deputy Head of the Soviet Information Bureau (Sovinformbureau); the Committee did not have offices in the Soviet Union and could not act

independently; in fact, it was "not so much a fundraising tool for the Red Army as an arm of … pro-Soviet propaganda abroad."[44]

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Some Jewish authors argue that from the late 1930s there was a covert but persistent removal of Jews from the highest ranks of Soviet leadership in all spheres of administration. For instance, D. Shub writes that by 1943 not a single Jew remained among the top leadership of the NKVD, though "there were still many Jews in the Commissariat of Trade, Industry and Foods. There were also quite a few Jews in the Commissariat of Public Education and in the Foreign Office."[45] A modern researcher reaches a different conclusion based on archival materials that became available in 1990s: "During the 1940s, the role of Jews in punitive organs remained highly visible, coming to the end only in the postwar years during the campaign against cosmopolitanism."[46]

However, there are no differences of opinion regarding the relatively large numbers of Jews in the top command positions in the Army. The *Jewish World* reported that "in the Red Army now [during the war], there are over a hundred Jewish generals" and it provided a "small randomly picked list of such generals", not including "generals from the infantry". There were 17 names (ironically, "Major-General of Engineering Service Frenkel Naftaliy Aronovich" of GULag was also included).[47] A quarter of a century later, another collection of documents confirmed that there were no less than a hundred Jewish generals in the middle of the war and provided additional names.[48] (However, the volume unfortunately omitted the "Super-General" Lev Mekhlis – the closest and most trusted of Stalin's henchmen from 1937 to 1940; from 1941 he was the Head of Political Administration of the Red Army. Ten days after the start of the war, Mekhlis arrested a dozen of the highest generals of the Western Front.[49] He is also infamous for his punitive measures during the Soviet-Finnish War and then later at Kerch in the Crimea.)

The Short Jewish Encyclopedia provides an additional list of fifteen Jewish generals. Recently, an Israeli researcher has published a list of Jewish generals and admirals (including those who obtained the rank during the war). Altogether, there were 270 generals and admirals! This is not only "not a few" - this is an immense number indeed. He also notes four wartime narkoms (people's commissars): in addition to Kaganovich, these were Boris Vannikov (ammunition), Semien Ginzburg (construction), Isaac Zaltzman (tank industry) and several heads of main military administrations of the Red Army; the list also contains the names of four Jewish army commanders, commanders of 23 corps, 72 divisions, and 103 brigades.[50]

"In no army of the Allies, not even in the USA's, did Jews occupy such high positions, as in the Soviet Army", Dr. I. Arad writes.[51] No, "the displacement of Jews from the top posts" during the war did not happen. Nor had any supplanting yet manifested itself in general aspects of Soviet life. In 1944 (in the USA) a famous Socialist Mark Vishnyak stated that "not even hardcore enemies of the USSR can say that its government cultivates anti-Semitism".[52] *Back then* – it was undoubtedly true.

According to *Einigkeit* (from February 24, 1945, almost at the end of the war), "for courage and heroism in combat"… 63,374 Jews were awarded orders and medals", and 59 Jews became the Heroes of the Soviet Union. According to the Warsaw Yiddish language

newspaper *Volksstimme* in 1963 the number of the Jews awarded military decorations in WWII was 160,772, with 108 Heroes of the Soviet Union among them.[53] In the early 1990s, an Israeli author provided a list of names with dates of confirmation , in which 135 Jews are listed as Heroes of the Soviet Union and 12 Jews are listed as the full chevaliers of the Order of Glory.[54] We find similar information in the three-volume *Essays on Jewish Heroism.*[55] And finally, the latest archival research (2001) provides the following figures: "throughout the war 123,822 Jews were awarded military decorations"[56]; thus, among all nationalities of the Soviet Union, the Jews are in fifth place among the recipients of decorations, after Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians and Tatars.

I. Arad states that "anti-Semitism as an obstacle for Jews in their military careers, in promotion to higher military ranks and insignia did not exist in the Soviet Army during the war".[57] Production on the home front for the needs of the war was also highly rewarded. A huge influx of Soviet Jews into science and technology during the 1930s had borne its fruit during the war. Many Jews worked on the design of new types of armaments and instrumentation, in the manufacturing of warplanes, tanks, and ships, in scientific research, construction and development of industrial enterprises, in power engineering, metallurgy, and transport. For their work from 1941 to 1945 in support of the front, 180,000 Jews were awarded decorations. Among them were scientists, engineers, administrators of various managerial levels and workers, including more than two hundred who were awarded the Order of Lenin; nearly three hundred Jews were awarded the Stalin Prize in science and technology. During the war, 12 Jews became Heroes of Socialist Labor, eight Jews became full members of the Academy of Science in physics and mathematics, chemistry and technology, and thirteen became Member-Correspondents of the Academy.[58]

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Many authors, including S. Schwartz, note that "the role of Jews in the war was systematically concealed" along with a deliberate policy of "silence about the role of Jews in the war". He cites as a proof the works of prominent Soviet writers such as K. Simonov (*Days and Nights*) and V. Grossman (*The People Is Immortal*) where "among a vast number of surnames of soldiers, officers, political officers and others, there is not a single Jewish name."[59] Of course, this was due to censoring restrictions, especially in case of Grossman. (Later, military personnel with Jewish names re-appeared in Grossman's essays.) Another author notes that postcards depicting a distinguished submarine commander, Israel Fisanovich, were sold widely throughout the Soviet Union.[60] Later, such publications were extended; and an Israeli researcher lists another 12 Jews, Heroes of the Soviet Union, whose portraits were mass reproduced on postal envelopes[61].

Even through I'm a veteran of that war, I have not researched it through books much, nor was I collecting materials or have written anything about it. But I saw Jews on the front. I knew brave men among them. For instance, I especially want to mention two fearless antitank fighters: one of them was my university friend Lieutenant Emanuel Mazin; another was young ex-student soldier Borya Gammerov (both were wounded in action). In my battery among 60 people two were Jews - Sergeant Ilya Solomin, who fought very well through the whole war, and Private Pugatch, who soon slipped away to the Political Department. Among twenty officers of our division one was a Jew – Major Arzon, the head

of the supply department. Poet Boris Slutsky was a real soldier, he used to say: "I'm full of bullet holes". Major Lev Kopelev, even though he served in the Political Department of the Army (responsible for counter-propaganda aimed at enemy troops), he fearlessly threw himself in every possible fighting melee. A former "Mifliyetz" Semyon Freylih, a brave officer, remembers: "The war began … . So I was off to the draft board and joined the army" without graduating from the University, as "we felt ashamed not to share the hardships of millions".[62] Or take Lazar Lazarev, later a well-known literary critic, who as a young man fought at the front for two years until both his hands were mauled: "It was our duty and we would have been ashamed to evade it. … it was life - the only possible one under the circumstances, the only decent choice for the people of my age and education".[63] Boris Izrailevich Feinerman wrote in 1989 in response to an article in *Book Review*, that as a 17-year-old, he volunteered in July 1941 for an infantry regiment; in October, his both legs were wounded and he was taken prisoner of war; he escaped and walked out of the enemy's encirclement on crutches – then of course he was imprisoned for `treason´" – but in 1943 he managed to get out of the camp by joining a penal platoon; he fought there and later became a machine gunner of the assault infantry unit in a tank regiment and was wounded two more times.

We can find many examples of combat sacrifice in the biographical volumes of the most recent *Russian Jewish Encyclopedia*. Shik Kordonskiy, a commander of a mine and torpedo regiment, "smashed his burning plane into the enemy cargo ship"; he was posthumously made a Hero of the Soviet Union. Wolf Korsunsky, "navigator of the air regiment", became a Hero of the Soviet Union too. Victor Hasin, "a Hero of the Soviet Union … squadron commander … participated in 257 air skirmishes, personally shot down a number of the enemy's airplanes", destroyed another 10 on the ground; he was shot down over "the enemy occupied territory, and spent several days reaching and crossing the front lines. He died in hospital from his wounds". One cannot express it better! The *Encyclopedia* contains several dozens names of Jews who died in combat.

Yet, despite these examples of unquestioned courage, a Jewish scholar bitterly notes "the widespread belief in the army and in the rear that Jews avoided the combat units".[64] This is a noxious and painful spot. But, if you wish to ignore the painful spots, do not attempt to write a book about ordeals that were endured together.

In history, mutual national perceptions do count. "During the last war, anti-Semitism in Russia increased significantly. Jews were unjustly accused of evasion of military service and in particular, of evasion of front line service."[65] "It was often said about Jews that instead of fighting, they stormed the cities of Alma-Ata and Tashkent."[66] Here is a testimony of a Polish Jew who fought in the Red Army: "In the army, young and old had been trying to convince me that … there was not a single Jew on the front . `We've got to fight for them.´ I was told in a `friendly´ manner: `You're crazy. All your people are safely sitting at home. How come you are here on the front?´"[67] I. Arad writes: "Expressions such as `we are at the front, and the Jews are in Tashkent´, `one never sees a Jew at the front line´could be heard among soldiers and civilians alike."[68] I testify: Yes, one could hear this among the soldiers on the front. And right after the war - who has not experienced that? - a painful feeling remained among our Slavs that *our* Jews could have acted in that war in a more self-sacrificing manner, that among the lower ranks on the front the Jews could have been more represent.

These feelings are easy to blame (and they are blamed indeed) on unwarranted Russian anti-Semitism.(However, many sources blame that on the "German propaganda" digested by our public. What a people! They are good only to absorb propaganda - be it Stalin's or Hitler's - and they are good for nothing else!) Now that it is half a century passed since then. Isn't it time to unscramble the issue?

There are no official data available on the ethnic composition of the Soviet Army during the Second World War. Therefore, most studies on Jewish participation in the war provide only estimates, often without citation of sources or explanation of the methods of calculation. However, we can say that the 500,000 figure had been firmly established by 1990s: "The Jewish people supplied the Red Army with nearly 500,000 soldiers."[69] "During World War II, 550,000 Jews served in the Red Army."[70] The *Short Jewish Encyclopedia* notes that "only in the field force of the Soviet Army alone there were over 500,000 Jews", and "these figures do not include Jewish partisans who fought against Nazi Germany".[71] The same figures are cited in *Essays on Jewish heroism*, in Abramovich's book *In the Deciding War* and in other sources.

We came across only one author who attempted to justify his assessment by providing readers with details of his reasoning. It was an Israeli researcher, I. Arad, in his the above cited book on the Catastrophe.

Arad concludes that "the total number of Jews who fought in the ranks of the Soviet Army against the German Nazis was no less than 420,000-430,000".[72] He includes in this number "the thousands of Jewish partisans who fought against the German invaders in the woods" (they were later incorporated into the regular army in 1944 after the liberation of Western Byelorussia and Western Ukraine. At the same time, Arad believes that during the war "approximately 25,000-30,000 Jewish partisans operated in the occupied areas of the Soviet Union".[73] (The Israeli *Encyclopedia* in the article "Anti-Nazi Resistance" provides a lower estimate: "In the Soviet Union, more than 15,000 Jews fought against the Nazis in the underground organizations and partisan units."[74]) In his calculations, Arad assumes that the proportion of mobilized Jews was the same as the average percentage of mobilized for the entire population of USSR during the war, i.e., 13.0-13.5%. This would yield 390,000-405,000 Eastern Jews (out of the total of slightly more than 3 million), save for the fact that "in certain areas of Ukraine and Byelorussia, the percentage of Jewish population was very high; these people were not mobilized because the region was quickly captured by the Germans". However, the author assumes that in general the mobilization "shortfall" of the Eastern Jews was small and that before the Germans came, the majority of males of military age were still mobilized - and thus he settles on the number of 370,000-380,000 Eastern Jews who served in the army. Regarding Western Jews, Arad reminds us that in 1940 in Western Byelorussia and Western Ukraine, during the mobilization of conscripts whose year of birth fell between of 1919 and 1922, approximately 30,000 Jewish youths were enlisted, but the Soviet government considered the soldiers from the newly annexed western regions as "unreliable"; therefore, almost all of them were transferred to the Labor Army after the war began. "By the end of 1943, the process of re-mobilization of those who were previously transferred into the Labor Army began … and there were Jews among them." The author mentions that 6,000 to 7,000 Western Jewish refugees fought in the national Baltic divisions. By adding the Jewish partisans incorporated into the army in 1944, the author concludes:

"we can establish that at least 50,000 Jews from the territories annexed to the USSR, including those mobilized before the war, served in the Red Army". Thus I. Arad comes to the overall number of 420,000-430,000 Jews in military service between 1941 and 1944.[75]

According to Arad, the number of 500,000 soldiers commonly used in the sources would imply a *general base* (500,000 conscripts taken out of the entire Jewish population) of 3,700,000-3,850,000 people. According to the above-mentioned sources, the maximum estimate for the total number of Eastern and Western Jews who escaped the German occupation was 2,226,000, and even if we were to add to this *base all* 1,080,000 Eastern Jews who remained under the occupation, as though they had had time to supply the army with all the people of military age right before the arrival of the Germans – which was not the case – the base would still lack a half-million people. It would have also meant that the success of the evacuation, discussed above, was strongly underestimated.

There is no such contradiction in Arad's assessment. And though its individual components may require correction[76], overall, it surprisingly well matches with the hitherto unpublished data of the Institute of the Military History, derived from the sources of the Central Archive of the Ministry of Defense. According to that data, the numbers of mobilized personnel during the Great Patriotic War were as follows:

Russians - 19,650,000
Ukrainians – 5,320,000
Byelorussians – 964,000
Tartars – 511,000
Jews – 434,000
Kazakhs – 341,000
Uzbeks – 330,000
Others – 2,500,000[77]

Thus, contrary to the popular belief, the number of Jews in the Red Army in WWII was proportional to the size of mobilization base of the Jewish population. The fraction of Jews that participated in the war in general matches their proportion in the population.

So then, were the people's impressions of the war really prompted by anti-Semitic prejudice? Of course, by the beginning of the war, a certain part of the older and middle-aged population still bore scars from the 1920s and 1930s. But a huge part of the soldiers were young men who were born at the turn of the revolution or after it; their perception of the world differed from that of their elders dramatically. Compare: during the First World War, in spite of the spy mania of the military authorities in 1915 against the Jews who resided near the front lines, there was no evidence of anti-Semitism in the Russian army. In 1914, out of 5 million Russian Jews,[78] "by the beginning of WWI, about 400,000 Jews were inducted into the Russian Imperial Army, and by the end of war in 1917 this number reached 500,000".[79] This means that at the outbreak of the war *every twelfth* Russian Jew fought in the war, while by the end, one out of ten. And in World War II, every *eighth or seventh*.

So, what was the matter? It can be assumed that the new disparities inside the army played their role with their influences growing stronger and sharper as one moved closer to the deadly frontline.

In 1874 Jews were granted equal rights with other Russian subjects regarding universal conscription, yet during WWI until the February Revolution, Tsar Alexander II's law which stipulated that Jews could not advance above the rank of petty officer (though it did not apply to military medics) was still enforced. Under the Bolsheviks, the situation had changed radically, and during the WWII, as the Israeli *Encyclopedia* summarizes, "compared to other nationalities of the Soviet Union, Jews were disproportionately represented among the senior officers, mainly because of the higher percentage of college graduates among them".[80] According to I. Arad's evaluation, "the number of Jews-commissars and political officers in various units during the war was relatively higher than number of Jews on other Army positions"; "at the very least, the percentage of Jews in the political leadership of the army" was "three times higher than the overall percentage of Jews among the population of the USSR during that period".[81] In addition, of course, Jews were "among the head professionals of military medicine … among the heads of health departments on several fronts. … Twenty-six Jewish generals of the Medical Corps and nine generals of the Veterinary Corps were listed in the Red Army." Thirty-three Jewish generals served in the Engineering Corps.[82] Of course, Jewish doctors and military engineers occupied not only high offices: "among the military medical staff… there were many Jews (doctors, nurses, orderlies)."[83] Let us recall that in 1926 the proportion of Jews among military doctors was 18.6% while their proportion in the male population was 1.7% [84], and this percentage could only increase during the war because of the large number of female Jewish military doctors: "traditionally, a high percentage of Jews in the Soviet medicine and engineering professions naturally contributed to their large number in the military units."[85]

However undeniably important and necessary for *final* victory these services were, what mattered is that not everybody could survive to see it. Meanwhile an ordinary soldier, glancing back from the frontline, saw all too clearly that even the second and third echelons behind the front were also considered participants in the war: all those deep-rear headquarters, suppliers, the whole Medical Corps from medical battalion to higher levels, numerous behind-the-lines technical units and, of course, all kinds of service personnel there, and, in addition, the entire army propaganda machine, including touring ensembles, entertainment troupes – they all were considered war veterans and, indeed, it was apparent to everyone that the concentration of Jews was much higher there than at the front lines. Some write that "among Leningrad's veteran-writers", the Jews comprised "by most cautious and perhaps understated assessment… 31%"[86] – that is, probably more. Yet how many of them were editorial staff? As a rule, editorial offices were situated 10-15 kilometers behind the frontline, and even if a correspondent happened to be at the front during hostilities, nobody would have forced him "to hold the position", he could leave immediately, which is a completely different psychology. Many trumpeted their status as "front-liners", but writers and journalists are guilty of it the most. Stories of prominent ones deserve a separate dedicated analysis. Yet how many others - not prominent and not famous – *front-liners* settled in various newspaper publishing offices at all levels – at fronts, armies, corps and divisions? Here is one episode. After graduating from the machine gun school, Second Lieutenant Alexander Gershkowitz was sent to the front. But, after a spell at the hospital, while "catching up with his unit, at a minor railroad station he sensed the familiar smell of printing ink, followed it – and arrived at the office of a division-level newspaper, which serendipitously was in need of a front-line correspondent". And his fate had changed. (But

what about catching up with his infantry unit?) "In this new position, he traveled thousands of kilometers of the war roads."[87]. Of course, military journalists perished in the war as well.

Musician Michael Goldstein, who got "the white ticket" ("not fit") because of poor vision, writes of himself: "I always strived to be at the front, where I gave thousands of concerts, where I wrote a number of military songs and where I often dug trenches."[88] Often? Really? A visiting musician - and with a shovel in his hands? As a war veteran, I say - an absolutely incredible picture. Or here is another amazing biography. Eugeniy Gershuni "in the summer of 1941… volunteered for a militia unit, where he soon organized a small pop ensemble". Those, who know about these unarmed and even non-uniformed columns marching to certain death, would be chilled. Ensemble, indeed! In September 1941, "Gershuni with his group of artists from the militia was posted to Leningrad's Red Army Palace, where he organized and headed a troop-entertainment circus". The story ends "on May 9, 1945, when Gershuni's circus threw a show on the steps of the Reichstag in Berlin"[89].

Of course, the Jews fought in the infantry and on the frontline. In the middle of the 1970s, a Soviet source provides data on the ethnic composition of two hundred infantry divisions between January 1, 1943 and January 1, 1944 and compares it to the population share of each nationality within the pre-September 1939 borders of the USSR.. During that period, Jews comprised respectively 1.5% and 1.28% in those divisions, while their proportion in the population in 1939 was 1.78%, Only by the middle of 1944, when mobilization began in the liberated areas, did the percentage of Jews fall to 1.14% because almost all Jews in those areas were exterminated.

It should be noted here that some audacious Jews took an even more fruitful and energetic part in the war outside of the front. For example, the famous "Red Orchestra" of Trepper and Gurevich spied on Hitler's regime from within until the fall of 1942, passing to the Soviets extremely important strategic and tactical information. (Both spies were arrested and held by the Gestapo until the end of the war; then, after liberation, they were arrested and imprisoned in the USSR - Trepper for 10 years and Gurevich for 15 years.[91]) Here is another example: a Soviet spy, Lev Manevich, was ex-commander of a special detachment during the Civil War and later a long-term spy in Germany, Austria, and Italy. In 1936, he was arrested in Italy, but he managed to communicate with Soviet intelligence even from the prison. In 1943, while imprisoned in the Nazi camps under the name of Colonel Starostin, he participated in the anti-fascist underground. In 1945, he was liberated by the Americans but died before returning to the USSR (where he could have easily faced imprisonment). Only 20 years later, in 1965, was he awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union posthumously.[92] (One can also find very strange biographies, such as Mikhail Scheinman's. Since the 1920s he served as a provincial secretary of the Komsomol; during the most rampant years of the Union of Militant Atheists he was employed at its headquarters; then he graduated from the Institute of Red Professors and worked in the press department of the Central Committee of the VKPb. In 1941, he was captured by the Germans and survived the entire war in captivity – a Jew and a high-level commissar at that! And despite categorical evidence of his culpability from SMERSH's [Translator's note: a frontline counter-intelligence organization, literally, "Death to Spies"] point of view, how could he possibly surviveif he was not a traitor? Others were imprisoned for a long time for lesser "crimes".Yet nothing happened,

and in 1946 he was already safely employed in the Museum of the History of Religion and then in the Institute of History at the Academy of Science.[93])

Yet such anecdotal evidence cannot make up a convincing argument for either side and there are no reliable and specific statistics nor are they likely to surface in the future.

Recently, an Israeli periodical has published some interesting testimony. When a certain Jonas Degen decided to volunteer for a Komsomol platoon at the beginning of the war, another Jewish youth, Shulim Dain, whom Jonas invited to come and join him, replied "that it would be really fortunate if the Jews could just watch the battle from afar since this is not their war, though namely this war may inspire Jews and help them to rebuild Israel. When I am conscripted to the army, I'll go to war. But to volunteer? Not a chance."[94] And Dain was not the only one who thought like this; in particular, older and more experienced Jews may have had similar thoughts. And this attitude, especially among the Jews devoted to the eternal idea of Israel, is fully understandable. And yet it is baffling, because the advancing enemy was the arch enemy of the Jews, seeking above all else to annihilate them. How could Dain and like-minded individuals remain neutral? Did they think that the Russians had no other choice but to fight for their land anyway?

One modern commentator (I know him personally – he is a veteran and a former camp inmate) concludes: "Even among the older veterans these days I have not come across people with such clarity of thought and depth of understanding" as Shulim Dain (who perished at Stalingrad) possessed: "two fascist monsters interlocked in deadly embrace". Why should we participate in that?[95]

Of course, Stalin's regime was not any better than Hitler's. But for the *wartime Jews*, these two monsters could not be equal! If *that other* monster won, what could then have happened to the Soviet Jews? Wasn't *this* war the personal Jewish war? wasn't it their *own Patriotic War* – to cross arms with the deadliest enemy in the entire Jewish history? And those Jews who perceived the war as their own and who did not separate their fate from that of Russians, those like Freylikh, Lazarev and Fainerman, whose thinking was opposite to Shulim Dain's, they fought selflessly.

God forbid, I do not explain the Dain's position as "Jewish cowardice". Yes, the Jews demonstrated survivalist prudence and caution throughout the entire history of the Diaspora, yet it is this history that explains these qualities. And during the Six-Day War and other Israeli wars, the Jews have proven their outstanding military courage.

Taking all that into consideration, Dain's position can only be explained by a relaxed feeling of dual citizenship – the very same that back in 1922, Professor Solomon Lurie from Petrograd considered as one of the main sources of anti-Semitism (and its explanation) – a Jew living in a particular country belongs *not only to that* country, and his loyalties become inevitably split in two. The Jews have "always harbored nationalist attitudes, but the object of their nationalism was Jewry, not the country in which they lived".[96] Their interest in *this* country is partial. After all, they – even if many of them only unconsciously – saw ahead looming in the future *their very own* nation of Israel.

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And what about the rear? Researchers are certain about the "growth of anti-Semitism … during the war."[97] "The curve of anti-Semitism in those years rose sharply again, and anti-Semitic manifestations … by their intensity and prevalence dwarfed the anti-Semitism of the second half of the 1920s." [98] "During the war, anti-Semitism become commonplace in the domestic life in the Soviet deep hinterland."[99]

During evacuation, "so-called domestic anti-Semitism, which had been dormant since the establishment of the Stalinist dictatorship in the early 1930s, was revived against the background of general insecurity and breakdown and other hardships and deprivations, engendered by the war."[100] This statement refers mainly to Central Asia, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan, "especially when the masses of wounded and disabled veterans rushed there from the front",[101] and exactly there the masses of the evacuated Jews lived, including Polish Jews, who were "torn from their traditional environment" by deportation and who had no experience of Soviet kolkhozes. Here are the testimonies of Jewish evacuees to Central Asia recorded soon after the war: "The low labor productivity among evacuated Jews … served in the eyes of the locals as a proof of allegedly characteristic Jewish reluctance to engage in physical labor."[102] "The intensification of [anti-Semitic] attitudes was fueled by the Polish refugees' activity on the commodity markets."[103] "Soon they realized that their regular incomes from the employment in industrial enterprises, kolkhozes, and cooperatives … would not save them from starvation and death. To survive, there was only one way – trading on the market or `speculation´"; therefore, it was the Soviet reality that drove "Polish Jews to resort to market transactions whether they liked it or not."[104] "The non-Jewish population of Tashkent was ill-disposed toward the Jewish evacuees from Ukraine. Some said, `Look at these Jews. They always have a lot of money.´"[105] "Then there were incidents of harassment and insults of Jews, threats against them, throwing them out of bread queues."[106] "Another group of Russian Jews, mostly bureaucrats with a considerable amount of cash, inspired the hostility of the locals for inflating the already high market prices."[107]

The author proceeds confidently to explain these facts thus: "Hitler's propaganda reaches even here",[108] and he is not alone in reaching such conclusions.

What a staggering revelation! How could Hitler's propaganda victoriously reach and permeate all of Central Asia when it was barely noticeable at the front with all those rare and dangerous-to-touch leaflets thrown from airplanes, and when all private radio receiver sets were confiscated throughout the USSR?

No, the author realizes that there "was yet another reason for the growth of anti-Semitic attitudes in the districts that absorbed evacuees *en masse*. There, the antagonism between the general mass of the provincial population and the privileged bureaucrats from the country's central cities manifested itself in a subtle form. Evacuation of organizations from those centers into the hinterland provided the local population with an opportunity to fully appreciate the depth of social contrast."[109]

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Then there were those populations that experienced the German invasion and occupation, for instance, the Ukrainians. Here is testimony published in March 1945 in the bulletin of the

Jewish Agency for Palestine: "The Ukrainians meet returning Jews with hostility. In Kharkov, a few weeks after the liberation, Jews do not dare to walk alone on the streets at night. … There have been many cases of beating up Jews on the local markets. … Upon returning to their homes, Jews often found only a portion of their property, but when they complained in courts, Ukrainians often perjured themselves against them."[110] (The same thing happened everywhere; besides it was useless to complain in court anyway: many of the returning non-Jewish evacuees found their old places looted as well.) "There are many testimonies about hostile attitudes towards Jews in Ukraine after its liberation from the Germans."[111] "As a result of the German occupation, anti-Semitism in all its forms has significantly increased in all social strata of Ukraine, Moldova and Lithuania."[112]

Indeed, *here*, in these territories, Hitler's anti-Jewish propaganda did work well during the years of occupation, and yet the main point was the same: that under the Soviet regime the Jews had merged with the ruling class – and so a secret German report from the occupied territories in October 1941 states that the "animosity of the Ukrainian population against Jews is enormous…. they view the Jews … as informants and agents of the NKVD, which organized the terror against the Ukrainian people."[113]

Generally speaking, early in the war, the "German's plan was to create an impression that it was not Germans but the local population that began extermination of the Jews"; S. Schwartz believes that, unlike the reports of the German propaganda press, "the German reports not intended for publication are reliable."[114] He profusely quotes a report by SS Standartenführer F. Shtoleker to Berlin on the activities of the SS units under his command (operating in the Baltic states, Byelorussia and in some parts of the RSFSR) for the period between the beginning of the war in the East and October 15, 1941: "Despite facing considerable difficulties, we were able to direct local anti-Semitic forces toward organization of anti-Jewish pogroms within several hours after arrival [of German troops]. … It was necessary to show that … it was a natural reaction to the years of oppression by Jews and communist terror. … It was equally important to establish for the future as an undisputed and provable fact that … the local people have resorted to the most severe measures against Bolsheviks and Jews on their own initiative, without demonstrable evidence for any guidance from the German authorities."[115]

The willingness of the local population for such initiatives varied greatly in different occupied regions. "In the tense atmosphere of the Baltics, the hatred of Jews reached a boiling point at the very moment of Hitler's onslaught against Soviet Russia on June 22, 1941."[116] The Jews were accused of collaboration with the NKVD in the deportation of Baltic citizens. The *Israeli Encyclopedia* quotes an entry from the diary of Lithuanian physician E. Budvidayte-Kutorgene: "All Lithuanians, with few exceptions, are unanimous in their hatred of Jews."[117] Yet, the Standartenführer reports that "to our surprise, it was not an easy task … to induce a pogrom there". This was achieved with the help of Lithuanian partisans, who exterminated 1,500 Jews in Kaunas during the night of June 26 and 2,300 more in the next few days; they also burned the Jewish quarter and several synagogues.[118] "Mass executions of the Jews were conducted by the SS and the Lithuanian police on October 29 and November 25, 1941." About 19,000 of the 36,000 Jews of Kaunas were shot in the Ninth Fort.[119] "In many Lithuanian cities and towns, all of the Jewish population was exterminated by local Lithuanian police under German control in the autumn of 1941."[120] "It was much harder to

induce the same self-cleaning operations and pogroms in Latvia", reports the Standartenführer, because there "the entire national leadership, especially in Riga, was destroyed or deported by the Bolsheviks."[121] Still, on July 4, 1941, Latvian activists in Riga "set fire to several synagogues into which the Jews had been herded. … About 2,000 died"; in the first days of occupation, locals assisted in executions by the Germans of several thousand Jews in the Bikernieki forest near Riga, and in late October and in early November in the shootings of about 27,000 Jews at a nearby railway station Rumbula.[122] In Estonia, "with a small number of Jews in the country, it was not possible to induce pogroms", reports the officer.[123] (Estonian Jews were destroyed without pogroms: "In Estonia, about 2,000 Jews remained. Almost all male Jews were executed in the first weeks of the occupation by the Germans and their Estonian collaborators. … The rest were interned in the concentration camp Harku near Tallinn", and by the end of 1941 all of them were killed.[124]

But the German leadership was disappointed in Byelorussia. S. Schwartz: "the failure of the Germans to draw sympathy from the broad masses of locals to the cause of extermination of Jews… is completely clear from secret German documents … The population invariably and consistently refrains from any independent action against the Jews."[125] Still, according to eyewitnesses in Gorodok in the Vitebsk oblast, when the ghetto was liquidated on Oct. 14, 1941, the "*Polizei* were worse than the Germans";[126] and in Borisov, the "Russian police" (it follows in the report that they were actually imported from Berlin) "destroyed within two days [October 20 and 21, 1941] 6,500 Jews. Importantly, the author of the report notes that the killings of Jews were not met with sympathy from the local population: `Who ordered that… How is it possible…? Now they kill the Jews, and when will be our turn? What have these poor Jews done? They were just workers. The really guilty ones are, of course, long gone.´"[127] And here is a report by a German "trustee", a native Byelorussian from Latvia: "In Byelorussia, there is no Jewish question. For them, it's a purely German business, not Byelorussian… Everybody sympathizes with and pities the Jews, and they look at Germans as barbarians and murderers of the Jews [Judenhenker]: a Jew, they say, is a human being just like a Byelorussian."[128] In any case, S. Schwartz writes that "there were no national Byelorussian squads affiliated with the German punitive units, though there were Latvian, Lithuanian, and `mixed´ squads; the latter enlisted some Byelorussians as well."[129]

The project was more successful in Ukraine. From the beginning of the war, Hitler's propaganda incited the Ukrainian nationalists ("Bandera?s Fighters") to take revenge on the Jews for the murder of Petliura by Schwartzbard.[130] The organization of Ukrainian Nationalists of Bandera-Melnik (OUN) did not need to be persuaded: even before the Soviet-German War, in April 1941, it adopted a resolution at its Second Congress in Krakow, in which paragraph 17 states: "The Yids in the Soviet Union are the most loyal supporters of the ruling Bolshevik regime and the vanguard of Moscow imperialism in Ukraine… The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists considers the Yids as the pillar of the Moscow-Bolshevik regime, while educating the masses that Moscow is the main enemy."[131] Initially, the "Bandera Fighters" allied with the Germans against the Bolsheviks. During the whole of 1940 and the first half of 1941, the OUN leadership was preparing for a possible war between Germany and the USSR. "Then the main base of the OUN was the Generalgouvernement, i. e., the Nazi-occupied Poland. … Ukrainian militias were being created there, and lists of suspicious persons, with Jews among them, were compiled. Later these lists were used by Ukrainian nationalists to exterminate Jews. … `Mobile units´ for the

East Ukraine were created and battalions of Ukrainian Nationalists, `Roland´ and `Nakhtigal´, were formed in the German Army." The OUN arrived in the East [of Ukraine] together with the frontline German troops. During the summer of 1941 "a wave of Jewish pogroms rolled over Western Ukraine. … with participation of both Melnyk's and of Bandera's troops. As a result of these pogroms, around 28,000 Jews were killed."[132] Among OUN documents, there is a declaration by J. Stetzko (who in July 1941 was named the head of the Ukrainian government): "The Jews help Moscow to keep Ukraine in slavery, and therefore, I support extermination of the Yids and the need to adopt in Ukraine the German methods of extermination of Jewry." In July, a meeting of Bandera's OUN leaders was held in Lvov, where, among other topics, policies toward Jews were discussed. There were various proposals: to build the policy "on the principles of Nazi policy before 1939. … There were proposals to isolate Jews in ghettoes. … But the most radical proposal was made by Stepan Lenkavskiy, who stated: `Concerning the Jews we will adopt all the measures that will lead to their eradication.´"[133] And until the relations between the OUN and the Germans deteriorated (because Germany did not recognize the self-proclaimed Ukrainian independence), there were "many cases, especially in the first year … when Ukrainians directly assisted the Germans in the extermination of Jews." "Ukrainian auxiliary police, recruited by the Germans mainly in Galicia and Volhynia,"[134] played a special role. "In Uman in September 1941, Ukrainian city police under command of several officers and sergeants of the SS shot nearly 6,000 Jews"; and in early November 6 km outside Rovno, "the SS and Ukrainian police slaughtered 21,000 Jews from the ghetto."[135] However, S. Schwartz writes: "It is impossible to figure out which part of the Ukrainian population shared an active anti-Semitism with a predisposition toward pogroms. Probably quite a large part, particularly the more cultured strata, did not share these sentiments." As for the original part of the Soviet Ukraine [within the pre-September 1939 Soviet borders], "no evidence for the `spontaneous´ pogroms by Ukrainians could be found in the secret German reports from those areas."[136] In addition, "Tatar militia squads in the Crimea were exterminating Jews also."[137]

Regarding indigenous Russian regions occupied by the Germans, the Germans "could not exploit anti-Russian sentiments and the argument about Moscow's imperialism was unsustainable; and the argument for any Judeo-Bolshevism, devoid of support in local nationalism, largely lost its appeal"; among the local Russian population "only relatively few people actively supported the Germans in their anti-Jewish policies of extermination."[138]

A researcher on the fate of Soviet Jewry concludes: the Germans in Lithuania and Latvia "had a tendency to mask their pogromist activities, bringing to the fore extermination squads made up of pogromists emerging under German patronage from the local population"; but "in Byelorussia, and to a considerable extent even in Ukraine and especially in the occupied areas of the RSFSR", the Germans did not succeed as "the local population had mostly disappointed the hopes pinned on it" - and there "the Nazi exterminators had to proceed openly."[139]

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Hitler's plan for the military campaign against the Soviet Union (Operation Barbarossa) included "*special tasks* to prepare the ground for political rule, with the character of these tasks stemming from the all-out struggle between the two opposing political systems." In

May and June 1941, the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht issued more specific directives, ordering execution without trial of persons suspected of hostile action against Germany (and of political commissars, partisans, saboteurs and Jews in any case) in the theater of Barbarossa.[140]

To carry out *special tasks* in the territory of the USSR, four special groups (*Einsatzgruppen*) were established within the Security Service (SS) and the Secret Police (Gestapo), that had operational units (*Einsatzkommando*) numerically equal to companies. The *Einsatzgruppen* advanced along with the front units of the German Army, but reported directly to the Chief of Security of the Third Reich, Reinhard Heydrich.

Einsatzgruppe A (about 1000 soldiers and SS officers under the command of SS Standartenführer Dr. F. Shtoleker) of Army Group "North" operated in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and the Leningrad and Pskov oblasts. Group B (655 men, under the command of Brigadenführer A. Neveu) was attached to Army Group "Centre", which was advancing through Byelorussia and the Smolensk Oblast toward Moscow. Group C (600, Standartenführer E. Rush) was attached to Army Group "South" and operated in the Western and Eastern Ukraine. Group D (600 men under the command of SS Standartenführer Prof. O. Ohlendorf) was attached to the 11th Army and operated in Southern Ukraine, the Crimea, and in the Krasnodar and Stavropol regions.

Extermination of Jews and commissars ("carriers of the Judeo-Bolshevik ideology") by the Germans began from the first days of the June 1941invasion, though they did so "somewhat chaotically and with an extremely broad scope."[141] "In other German-occupied countries, elimination of the Jewish population proceeded gradually and thoroughly. It usually started with legal restrictions, continued with the creation of ghettos and introduction of forced labor and culminated in deportation and mass extermination. In Soviet Russia, all these elements were strangely intermingled in time and place. In each region, sometimes even within one city, various methods of harassment were used… there was no uniform or standardized system."[142] Shooting of Jewish prisoners of war could happen sometimes right upon capture and sometimes later in the concentration camps; civilian Jews were sometimes first confined in ghettoes, sometimes in forced-labor camps, and in other places they were shot outright on the spot, and still in other places the "gas vans" were used. "As a rule, the place of execution was an anti-tank ditch, or just a pit."[143]

The numbers of those exterminated in the cities of the Western USSR by the winter of 1941 (the first period of extermination) are striking: according to the documents, in Vilnius out of 57,000 Jews who had lived there about 40,000 were killed; in Riga out of 33,000 – 27,000; in Minsk out of the 100,000-strong ghetto – 24,000 were killed (there the extermination continued until the end of occupation); in Rovno out of 27,000 Jews - 21,000 were killed; in Mogilev about 10,000 Jews were shot; in Vitebsk - up to 20,000; and near Kiselevich village nearly 20,000 Jews from Bobruisk were killed; in Berdichev - 15,000[144].

By late September, the Nazis staged a mass extermination of Jews in Kiev. On September 26 they distributed announcements around the city requiring all Jews, under the penalty of death, to report to various assembly points. And Jews, having no other option but to submit, gathered obediently, if not trustingly, altogether about 34,000; and on September 29 and 30, they were methodically shot at Babi Yar, putting layer upon layers of corpses in a large

ravine.Hence there was no need to dig any graves - a giant hecatomb! According to the official German announcement, not questioned later, 33,771 Jews were shot over the course of two days. During the next two years of the Kiev occupation, the Germans continued shootings in their favorite and so *convenient* ravine. It is believed that the number of the executed – not only Jews – had reached, perhaps, 100,000.[45]

The executions at Babi Yar have become a symbol in world history. People shrug at the cold-blooded calculation, the business-like organization, so typical for the 20th century that crowns humanistic civilization: during the "savage" Middle Ages people killed each other *en masse* only in a fit of rage or in the heat of battle.

It should be recalled that within a few kilometers from Babi Yar, in the enormous Darnitskiy camp, tens of thousands Soviet prisoners of war, soldiers and officers, died during the same months: yet we do not commemorate it properly, and many are not even aware of it. The same is true about the more than two million Soviet prisoners of war who perished during the first years of the war.

The Catastrophe persistently raked its victims from all the occupied Soviet territories.

In Odessa on October 17, 1941, on the second day of occupation by German and Romanian troops, several thousand Jewish males were killed, and later, after the bombing of the Romanian Military Office, the total terror was unleashed: about 5,000 people, most of them Jews and thousands of others, were herded into a suburban village and executed there. In November, there was a mass deportation of people into the Domanevskiy District, where "about 55,000 Jews" were shot in December and January of 1942[146]. In the first months of occupation, by the end of 1941, 22,464 Jews were killed in Kherson and Nikolayev; 11,000 in Dnepropetrovsk; 8,000 in Mariupol' and almost as many in Kremenchug; about 15,000 in Kharkov's Drobytsky Yar; and more than 20,000 in Simferopol' and Western Crimea.[147]

By the end of 1941, the German High Command had realized that the "blitz" had failed and that a long war loomed ahead. The needs of the war economy demanded a different organization of the home front. In some places, the German administration slowed down the extermination of Jews in order to exploit their manpower and skills. "As the result, ghettoes survived in large cities like Riga, Vilnius, Kaunas, Baranovichi, Minsk, and in other, smaller ones, where many Jews worked for the needs of the German war economy."[148] Yet the demand for labor that prolonged the existence of these large ghettoes did not prevent resumption of mass killings in other places in the spring of 1942: in Western Byelorussia, Western Ukraine, Southern Russia and the Crimea, 30,000 Jews were deported from the Grodno region to Treblinka and Auschwitz; Jews of Polesia, Pinsk, Brest-Litovsk, and Smolensk were eradicated. During the 1942 summer offensive, the Germans killed local Jews immediately upon arrival: the Jews of Kislovodsk, Pyatigorsk and Essentuki were killed in antitank ditches near Mineralni'ye Vody; thus died evacuees to Essentuki from Leningrad and Kishinev. Jews of Kerch and Stavropol were exterminated as well. In Rostov-on-Don, recaptured by the Germans in late July 1942, all the remaining Jewish population was eradicated by August 11.

In 1943, after the battles of Stalingrad and Kursk, the outcome of the war became clear. During their retreat, the Germans decided to exterminate all remaining Jews. On June 21,

1943 Himmler ordered the liquidation of the remaining ghettoes. In June 1943, the ghettoes of Lvov, Ternopol, and Drohobych were liquidated. After the liberation of Eastern Galicia in 1944, "only 10,000 to 12,000 Jews were still alive, which constituted about 2% of all Jews who had remained under occupation." Able-bodied Jews from ghettoes in Minsk, Lida, and Vilnius were transferred to concentration camps in Poland, Estonia, and Latvia, while the rest were shot. Later, during the summer, 1944 retreat from the Baltics, some of the Jews in those camps were shot, and some were moved into camps in Germany (Stutthof et al.).[149]

Destined for extermination, Jews fought for survival: underground groups sprang up in many ghettoes to organize escapes. Yet after a successful breakout, a lot depended on the local residents - that they not betray the Jews, provide them with non-Jewish papers, shelter and food. In the occupied areas, Germans sentenced those helping Jews to death.[150] "But everywhere, in all occupied territories, there were people who helped the Jews. … Yet there were few of them. They risked their lives and the lives of their families. … There were hundreds, maybe thousands of such people. But the majority of local populations just watched from a distance."[151] In Byelorussia and the occupied territories of the RSFSR, where local populations were not hostile to the remaining Jews and where no pogroms ever occurred, the local population provided still less assistance to Jews than in Europe or even "in Poland, the country … of widespread, traditional, folk anti-Semitism."[152] (Summaries of many similar testimonies can be found in books by S. Schwartz and I. Arad.) They plausibly attribute this not only to the fear of execution but also to the habit of obedience to authorities (developed over the years of Soviet rule) and to not meddling in the affairs of others.

Yes, we have been so downtrodden, so many millions have been torn away from our midst in previous decades, that any attempt at resistance to government power was foredoomed, so now Jews as well could not get the support of the population.

But even well-organized Soviet underground and guerrillas directed from Moscow did little to save the doomed Jews. Relations with the Soviet guerrillas were a specially acute problem for the Jews in the occupied territories. Going into the woods, i.e., joining up with a partisan unit, was a better lot for Jewish men than waiting to be exterminated by the Germans. Yet hostility to the Jews was widespread and often acute among partisans, and "there were some Russian detachments that did not accept Jews on principle. They alleged that Jews cannot and do not want to fight", writes a former Jewish partisan Moshe Kaganovich. A non-Jewish guerilla recruit was supplied with weapons, but a Jew was required to provide his own, and sometimes it was traded down. "There is pervasive enmity to Jews among partisans. … in some detachments anti-Semitism was so strong that the Jews felt compelled to flee from such units."[153]

For instance, in 1942 some two hundred Jewish boys and girls fled into the woods from the ghetto in the shtetl of Mir in Grodno oblast, and "there they encountered anti-Semitism among Soviet guerrillas, which led to the death of many who fled; only some of them were able to join guerrilla squads."[154] Or another case: A guerrilla squad under the command of Ganzenko operated near Minsk. It was replenished "mainly with fugitives from the Minsk ghetto", but the "growing number of Jews in the unit triggered anti-Semitic clashes" – and then the Jewish part of the detachment broke away.[155] Such actions on the part of the

guerrillas were apparently spontaneous, not directed from the center. According to Moshe Kaganovich, from the end of 1943 "the influence of more-disciplined personnel arriving from the Soviet Union" had increased "and the general situation for [the Jews had] somewhat improved."[156] However, he complains that when a territory was liberated by the advancing regular Soviet troops and the partisans were sent to the front (which is true, and everybody was sent indiscriminately), it was primarily Jews who were sent[157] – and that is incredible.

However, Kaganovich writes that Jews were sometimes directly assisted by the partisans. There were even "partisan attacks on small towns in order to save Jews" from ghettoes and [concentration] camps, and that "Russian partisan movement helped fleeing Jews to cross the front lines. … [And in this way they] smuggled across the frontline many thousands of Jews who were hiding in the forests of Western Byelorussia escaping the carnage." A partisan force in the Chernigov region accepted "more than five hundred children from Jewish family camps in the woods, protected them and took care of them… After the Red Army liberated Sarny (on Volyn), several squads broke the front and sent Jewish children to Moscow." (S. Schwartz believes that "these reports are greatly exaggerated. [But] they are based on real facts, [and they] merit attention."[158])

Jewish family camps originated among the Jewish masses fleeing into the woods and there "were many thousands of such fugitives." Purely Jewish armed squads were formed specifically for the protection of these camps. (Weapons were purchased through third parties from German soldiers or policemen.) Yet how to feed them all? The only way was to take food as well as shoes and clothing, both male and female, by force from the peasants of surrounding villages. "The peasant was placed between the hammer and the anvil. If he did not carry out his assigned production minimum, the Germans burned his household and killed him as a `partisan´. On the other hand, guerrillas took from him by force all they needed"[159] – and this naturally caused spite among the peasants: they are robbed by Germans and robbed by guerrillas - and now in addition even the Jews rob them? And the Jews even take away clothes from their women?

In the spring of 1943, partisan Baruch Levin came to one such family camp, hoping to get medicines for his sick comrades. He remembers: Tuvia Belsky "seemed like a legendary hero to me. … Coming from the people, he managed to organize a 1,200-strong unit in the woods. … In the worst days when a Jew could not even feed himself, he cared for the sick, elderly and for the babies born in the woods." Levin told Tuvia about Jewish partisans: "We, the few survivors, no longer value life. Now the only meaning of our lives is revenge. It is our duty – to fight the Germans, wipe out all of them to the last one." I talked for a long time; … offered to teach Belsky's people how to work with explosives, and all other things I have myself learned. But my words, of course, could not change Tuvia's mindset… `Baruch, I would like you to understand one thing. It is precisely because there are so few of us left, it is so important for me that the Jews survive. And I see this as my purpose; it is the most important thing for me.´"[160]

And the very same Moshe Kaganovich, as late as in 1956, wrotein a book published in Buenos Aires, "in peacetime, years after the devastating defeat of Nazism" - shows, according to S. Schwartz, "a really bloodthirsty attitude toward the Germans, an attitude that seems to be influenced by the Hitler plague…. he glorifies putting German prisoners to

`Jewish death´ by Jewish partisans according to the horrible Nazi' examples or excitedly recalls the speech by a commander of a [Jewish] guerrilla unit given before the villagers of a Lithuanian village who were gathered and forced to kneel by partisans in the square after a punitive raid against that village whose population had actively assisted the Germans in the extermination of Jews (several dozen villagers were executed during that raid)."[161] S. Schwartz writes about this with a restrained but clear condemnation.

Yes, a lot of things happened. Predatory killings call for revenge, but each act of revenge, tragically, plants the seeds of new retribution in the future.

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The different Jewish sources variously estimate the total losses among Soviet Jews during the Second World War (within the post-war borders).
"How many Soviet Jews survived the war?", asks S. Schwartz and offers this calculation: 1,810,000-1,910,000 (excluding former refugees from the Western Poland and Romania, now repatriated). "The calculations imply that the number of Jews by the end of the war was markedly lower than two million and much lower than the almost universally accepted number of three million."[162] So, the *total* number of losses according to Schwarz was 2,800,000-2,900,000.

In 1990 I. Arad provided his estimate: "During the liberation of German-occupied territories … the Soviet Army met almost no Jews. Out of the 2,750,000-2,900,000 Jews who remained under the Nazi rule [in 1941] in the occupied Soviet territories, almost all died." To this figure Arad suggests adding "about 120,000 Jews – Soviet Army soldiers who died on the front, and about 80,000 shot in the POW camps", and "tens of thousands of Jews [who died] during the siege of Leningrad, Odessa and other cities, and in the deep rear … because of harsh living conditions in the evacuation."[163]

Demographer M. Kupovetskiy published several studies in the 1990s, where he used newly available archival materials, made some corrections to older data and employed an improved technique for ethnodemographic analysis. His result was that the general losses of Jewish population within the postwar USSR borders in 1941-1945 amounted to 2,733,000 (1,112,000 Eastern and 1,621,000 Western Jews), or 55% of 4,965,000 - the total number of Jews in the USSR in June 1941. This figure, apart from the victims of Nazi extermination, includes the losses among the military and the guerrillas, among civilians near the front line, during evacuation and deportation, as well as the victims of Stalin's camps during the war. (However, the author notes, that quantitative evaluation of each of these categories within the overall casualty figure is yet to be done.[164]) Apparently, the *Short Jewish Encyclopedia* agrees with this assessment as it provides the same number.[165]

The currently accepted figure for the total losses of the Soviet population during the Great Patriotic War is 27,000,000 (if the "method of demographic balance" is used, it is 26,600,000[166]) and this may still be underestimated.

We must not overlook what that war was for the Russians. The war rescued not only their country, not only Soviet Jewry, but also the entire social system of the Western world from Hitler. This war exacted such sacrifice from the Russian people that its strength and health

have never since fully recovered. That war overstrained the Russian people. It was yet another disaster on top of those of the Civil War and de-kulakization - and from which the Russian people have almost run dry.

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The ruthless and unrelenting Catastrophe, which was gradually devouring Soviet Jewry in a multitude of exterminating events all over the occupied lands, was part of a greater Catastrophe designed to eradicate the entire European Jewry.

As we examine only the events in Russia, the Catastrophe as a whole is not covered in this book. Yet the countless miseries having befallen on both our peoples, the Jewish and the Russian, in the 20th century, and the unbearable weight of the lessons of history and gnawing anxiety about the future, make it impossible not to share, if only briefly, some reflections about it, reflections of mine and others, and impossible not to examine how the high Jewish minds look at the Catastrophe from the historical perspective and how they attempt to encompass and comprehend it.

It is for a reason that the "Catastrophe" is always written with a capital letter. It was an epic event for such an ancient and historical people. It could not fail to arouse the strongest feelings and a wide variety of reflections and conclusions among the Jews.
In many Jews, long ago assimilated and distanced from their own people, the Catastrophe reignited a more distinct and intense sense of their Jewishness. Yet "for many, the Catastrophe became a proof that God is dead. If He had existed, He certainly would never have allowed Auschwitz."[167] Then there is an opposite reflection: "Recently, a former Auschwitz inmate said: "In the camps, we were given a new Torah, though we have not been able to read it yet."[168]

An Israeli author states with conviction: "The Catastrophe happened because we did not follow the Covenant and did not return to our land. We had to return to our land to rebuild the Temple."[169]
Still, such an understanding is achieved only by a very few, although it does permeate the entire Old Testament.

Some have developed and still harbor a bitter feeling: "Once, humanity turned away from us. We weren't a part of the West at the time of the Catastrophe. The West rejected us, cast us away."[170] "We are as upset by the nearly absolute indifference of the world and even of non-European Jewry to the plight of the Jews in the fascist countries as by the Catastrophe in Europe itself. … What a great guilt lies on the democracies of the world in general and especially on the Jews in the democratic countries! … The pogrom in Kishinev was an insignificant crime compared to the German atrocities, to … the methodically implemented plan of extermination of millions of Jewish lives; and yet Kishinev pogrom triggered a bigger protest… Even the Beilis Trial in Kiev attracted more worldwide attention."[171]

But this is unfair. After the world realized the essence and the scale of the destruction, the Jews experienced consistent and energetic support and passionate compassion from many nations.
Some contemporary Israelis recognize this and even warn their compatriots against any such

excesses: “Gradually, the memory of the Catastrophe ceased to be just a memory. It has become the ideology of the Jewish state. … The memory of the Catastrophe turned into a religious devotion, into the state cult. … The State of Israel has assumed the role of an apostle of the cult of the Catastrophe, the role of a priest who collects routine tithes from other nations. And woe to those who refuse to pay that tithe!” And in conclusion: “The worst legacy of Nazism for Jews is the Jew?s role of a super-victim.”[172]

Here is a similar excerpt from yet another author: the cult of the Catastrophe has filled “a void in the souls of secular Jews,” “from being a reaction to an event of the past, the trauma of the Catastrophe has evolved into a new national symbol, replacing all other symbols.” And “this `mentality of the Catastrophe´ is growing with each passing year”; “if we do not recover from the trauma of Auschwitz, we will never become a normal nation.”[173]

Among the Jews, the sometimes painful work of re-examining the Catastrophe never ceases. Here is the opinion of an Israeli historian, a former inmate of a Soviet camp: “I do not belong to those Jews who are inclined to blame the evil `goyim´ for our national misfortunes while casting ourselves as … poor lambs or toys in the hands of others. Anyway not in the 20th century! On the contrary, I fully agree with Hannah Arendt that the Jews of our century were equal participants in the historical games of the nations and the monstrous Catastrophe that befell them was the result of not only evil plots of the enemies of mankind, but also of the huge fatal miscalculations on the part of the Jewish people themselves, their leaders and activists.”[174]

Indeed, Hannah Arendt was “searching for the causes of the Catastrophe [also] in Jewry itself. … Her main argument is that modern anti-Semitism was one of the consequences of the particular attitudes of the Jews towards the state and society in Europe”; the Jews “turned out to be unable to evaluate power shifts in a nation state and growing social contradictions.”[175]

In the late 1970s, we read in Dan Levin’s book: “On this issue, I agree with Prof. Branover who believes that the Catastrophe was largely a punishment for our sins, including the sin of leading the communist movement. There is something in it.”[176]

Yet no such *noticeable* movement can be observed among world Jewry. To a great many contemporary Jews such conclusions appear insulting and blasphemous.

To the contrary: “The very fact of the Catastrophe served as a moral justification for Jewish chauvinism. Lessons of the Second World War have been learned exactly contrariwise. … The ideology of Jewish Nationalism has grown and strengthened on this soil. This is terribly sad. A feeling of guilt and compassion towards the nation-victim has become an indulgence, absolving the sin unforgivable for all others. It is hence comes the moral permissibility of public appeals not to mix one’s own ancient blood with the alien blood.”[177]

In the late 1980s, a Jewish publicist from Germany wrote: “Today, the `moral capital´ of Auschwitz is already spent.”[178] One year later, she stated: “Solid moral capital gained by the Jews because of Auschwitz seems to be depleted”; the Jews “can no longer proceed along the old way by raising pretensions to the world. Today, the world already has the right to converse with the Jews as it does with all others”; “the struggle for the rights of Jews is no

more progressive than a struggle for the rights of all other nations. It is high time to break the mirror and look around - we are not alone in this world."[179]

It would have been equally great for Russian minds to elevate themselves to similarly decent and benevolent self-criticism, especially in making judgments about Russian history of the 20th century – the brutality of the Revolutionary period, the cowed indifference of the Soviet times and the abominable plundering of the post-Soviet age. And to do it despite the unbearable burden of realization that it was we Russians who ruined our history – through our useless rulers but also through our own worthlessness – and despite the gnawing anxiety that this may be irredeemable – to perceive the Russian experience as possibly a punishment from the Supreme Power.

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74 КЕЭ, т. 8, с. 441.

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76 Скажем, нам представляется, что число «восточников», которых успели мобилизовать до прихода немцев, было несколько меньше, зато средний процент армейцев от всего населения СССР, был, возможно, несколько выше, чем рассчитанный И. Арадом.

77 В ныне выходящей Военной энциклопедии едва ли не впервые приведены сведения об общем числе мобилизованных в годы Великой Отечественной Войны — 30 миллионов. См.: Военная энциклопедия: В 8 т. М.: Воениздат, 2001. Т. 5. с. 182.

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Chapter 22: From the end of the war to Stalin's death

At the beginning of the 1920s the authors of a collection of articles titled *Russia and the Jews* foresaw that "all these bright perspectives" (for the Jews in the USSR) looked so bright only "if one supposes that the Bolsheviks would want to protect us. But would they? Can we assume that the people who in their struggle for power betrayed everything, from the Motherland to Communism, would remain faithful to us even when it stops benefiting them?"(1)

However, during so favorable a time to them as the 1920s and 1930s the great majority of Soviet Jews chose to ignore this sober warning or simply did not hear it.

Yet the Jews with their contribution to the Russian Revolution should have expected that one day the inevitable recoil of revolution would hit even them, at least during its ebb.

The postwar period became "the years of deep disappointments" (2) and adversity for Soviet Jews. During Stalin's last eight years, Soviet Jewry was tested by persecutions of the "cosmopolitans," the loss of positions in science, arts and press, the crushing of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee (EAK) with the execution of its leadership and, finally, by the "Doctors' Plot."

By the nature of a totalitarian regime, only Stalin himself could initiate the campaign aimed at weakening the Jewish presence and influence in the Soviet system. Only he could make the first move.

Yet because of the rigidity of Soviet propaganda and Stalin's craftiness, not a single sound could be uttered nor a single step made in the open. We have seen already that Soviet propaganda did not raise any alarm about the annihilation of Jews in Germany during the war; indeed it covered up those things, obviously being afraid of appearing pro-Jewish in the eyes of its own citizens.

The disposition of the Soviet authorities towards Jews could evolve for years without ever really surfacing at the level of official propaganda. The first changes and shuffles in the bureaucracy began quite inconspicuously at the time of growing rapprochement between Stalin and Hitler in 1939. By then Litvinov, a Jewish Minister of Foreign Affairs, was replaced by Molotov (an ethnic Russian) and a 'cleansing' of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NKID) was underway. Simultaneously, Jews were barred from entrance into diplomatic schools and military academies. Still, it took many more years before the disappearance of Jews from the NKID and the sharp decline of their influence in the Ministry of Foreign Trade became apparent.

Because of the intrinsic secrecy of all Soviet inner party moves, only very few were aware of the presence of the subtle anti-Jewish undercurrents in the Agitprop apparatus by the end of 1942 that aimed to push out Jews from the major art centers such as the Bolshoi Theatre, the Moscow Conservatory, and the Moscow Philarmonic, where, according to the note which Alexandrov, Head of Agitprop, presented to the Central Committee in the summer of 1942, 'everything was almost completely in the hands of non-Russians' and 'Russians had

become an ethnic minority' (accompanied by a detailed table to convey particulars) (3). Later, there had been attempts to "begin national regulation of cadres… from the top down, which essentially meant primarily pushing out Jews from the managerial positions" (4). By and large, Stalin regulated this process by either supporting or checking such efforts depending on the circumstances.

The wartime tension in the attitudes toward Jews was also manifested during post-war re-evacuation. In Siberia and Central Asia, wartime Jewish refugees were not welcomed by the local populace, so after the war they mostly settled in the capitals of Central Asian republics, except for those who moved back, not to their old shtetls and towns, but into the larger cities (5).

The largest returning stream of refugees fled to Ukraine where they were met with hostility by the local population, especially because of the return of Soviet officials and the owners of desirable residential property. This reaction in the formerly occupied territories was also fueled by Hitler's incendiary propaganda during the Nazi occupation. Khrushchev, the Head of Ukraine from 1943 (when he was First Secretary of the Communist Party and at the same time Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of Ukraine), not only said nothing on this topic in his public speeches, treating the fate of Jews during the occupation with silence, but he also upheld the secret instruction throughout Ukraine not to employ Jews in positions of authority.

According to the tale of an old Jewish Communist Ruzha-Godes, who survived the entire Nazi occupation under a guise of being a Pole named Khelminskaya and was later denied employment by the long-awaited Communists because of her Jewishness, Khrushchev stated clearly and with his peculiar frankness: "In the past, the Jews committed many sins against the Ukrainian people. People hate them for that. We don't need Jews in our Ukraine. It would be better if they didn't return here. They would better go to Birobidzhan. This is Ukraine. And, we don't want Ukrainian people to infer that the return of Soviet authority means the return of Jews" (6).

"In the early September 1945 a Jewish major of the NKVD was brutally beaten in Kiev by two members of the military. He shot both of them dead. This incident caused a large-scale massacre of Jews with five fatalities" (7). There are documented sources of other similar cases (8).

Sotsialistichesky Vestnik wrote that the Jewish "national feelings (which were exacerbated during the war) overreacted to the numerous manifestations of anti-Semitism and to the even more common indifference to anti-Semitism" (9).

This motif is so typical — almost as much as anti-Semitism itself: the indifference to anti-Semitism was likely to cause outrage. Yes, preoccupied by their own miseries, people and nations often lose compassion for the troubles of others. And the Jews are not an exception here. A modern author justly notes: "I hope that I, as a Jew who found her roots and place in Israel, would not be accused of apostasy if I point out that in the years of our terrible disasters, the Jewish intellectuals did not raise their voices in defense of the deported nations of Crimea and the Caucasus" (10).

After the liberation of Crimea by the Red Army in 1943, "talks started among circles of the Jewish elite in Moscow about a rebirth of the Crimean project of 1920s," i.e., about resettling Jews in Crimea. The Soviet government did not discourage these aspirations, hoping that "American Jews would be more generous in their donations for the Red Army." It is quite possible that Mikhoels and Feffer [heads of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, EAK], based on a verbal agreement with Molotov, negotiated with American Zionists about financial support of the project for Jewish relocation to Crimea during their triumphal tour of the USA in summer of 1943. The idea of a Crimean Jewish Republic was also backed by Lozovsky, the then-powerful Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs (11).

The EAK had yet another project for a Jewish Republic — to establish it in the place of the former Volga German Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (where, as we have seen in previous chapters, Jewish settlements were established in the wake of the exile of the Germans). Ester Markish, widow of EAK member Perets Markish, confirms that he presented a letter "concerning transferring the former German Republic to the Jews" (12).

In the Politburo, "Molotov, Kaganovich and Voroshilov were the most positively disposed to the EAK" (13). And, "according to rumors, some members of the Politburo… were inclined to support this [Crimean] idea" (14). On February 15, 1944, Stalin was forwarded a memorandum about that plan which was signed by Mikhoels, Feffer and Epshtein. (According to P. Sudoplatov, although the decision to expel the Tatars from Crimea had been made by Stalin earlier, the order to carry it out reached Beria on February 14 (15), so the memorandum was quite timely.)

That was the high point of Jewish hopes. G. V. Kostirenko, a researcher of this period, writes: the leaders of the EAK "plunged into euphoria. They imagined (especially after Mikhoels' and Feffer's trip to the West) that with the necessary pressure, they could influence and steer their government's policy in the interests of the Soviet Jews, just like the American Jewish elite does it" (16).

But Stalin did not approve the Crimean project – it did not appeal to him because of the strategic importance of the Crimea. The Soviet leaders expected a war with America and probably thought that in such case the entire Jewish population of Crimea would sympathize with the enemy. (It is reported that at the beginning of the 1950s some Jews were arrested and told by their MGB [Ministry for State Security, a predecessor of KGB] investigators: "You are not going to stand against America, are you? So you are our enemies.") Khrushchev shared those doubts and 10 years later he stated to a delegation of the Canadian Communist party that was expressing particular interest in the Jewish question in the USSR: Crimea "should not be a center of Jewish colonization, because in case of war it will become the enemy's bridgehead" (17). Indeed, the petitions about Jewish settlement in Crimea were very soon used as a proof of the "state treason" on the part of the members of the EAK.

By the end of WWII the authorities again revived the idea of Jewish resettlement in Birobidzhan, particularly Ukrainian Jews. From 1946 to 1947 several organized echelons and a number of independent families were sent there, totaling up to 5-6 thousand persons (18). However, quite a few returned disillusioned. This relocation movement withered by 1948. Later, with a general turn of Stalin's politics, arrests among the few Birobidjan Jewish activists started. (They were accused of artificial inculcation of Jewish culture into the non-

Jewish population and, of course, espionage and of having planned Birobidzhan's secession in order to ally with Japan). This was the de facto end of the history of Jewish colonization in Birobidzhan. At the end of the 1920s there were plans to re-settle 60,000 Jews there by the end of the first 5-year planning period. By 1959 there were only 14,000 Jews in Birobidzhan, less than 9% of the population of the region (19).

However, in Ukraine the situation had markedly changed in favor of Jews. The government was engaged in the fierce struggle with Bandera's separatist fighters and no longer catered to the national feelings of Ukrainians. At the end of 1946, the Communist Party "started a covert campaign against anti-Semitism, gradually conditioning the population to the presence of Jews among authorities in different spheres of the national economy." At the same time, in the beginning of 1947, Kaganovich took over for Khrushchev as the official leader of Ukrainian Communist Party. The Jews were promoted in the party as well, "of which a particular example was the appointment of a Jew … the Secretary… of Zhitomir Obkom" (20).

However, the attitudes of many Jews towards this government and its new policies were justifiably cautious. Soon after the end of the war, when the former Polish citizens began returning to Poland, many non-Polish Jews "hastily seized this opportunity" and relocated there (21). (What happened after that in Poland is yet another story: a great overrepresentation of Jews occurred in the post-war puppet Polish government, among managerial elites and in the Polish KGB, which would again result in miserable consequences for the Jews of Poland. After the war, other countries of Eastern Europe saw similar conflicts: "the Jews had played a huge role in economic life of all these countries," and though they lost their possessions under Hitler, after the war, when "the restitution laws were introduced… (they) affected very large numbers of new owners." Upon their return Jews demanded the restoration of their property and enterprises that were not nationalized by Communists and this created a new wave of hostility towards them (22).)

Meanwhile, during these very years the biggest event in world Jewish history was happening — the state of Israel was coming into existence. In 1946-47, when the Zionists were at odds with Britain, Stalin, perhaps out of anti-British calculation and or opportunistically hoping to get a foothold there, took the side of the former. During all of 1947 Stalin, acting through Gromyko in the UN, actively supported the idea of the creation of an independent Jewish state in Palestine and supplied the Zionists with a critical supply of Czechoslovak-made weapons. In May 1948, only two days after the Israeli declaration of nationhood, the USSR officially recognized that country and condemned hostile actions of Arabs.

However, Stalin miscalculated to what extent this support would reinvigorate the national spirit of Soviet Jews. Some of them implored the EAK to organize a fundraiser for the Israeli military, others wished to enlist as volunteers, while still others wanted to form a special Jewish military division (23).

Amid this burgeoning enthusiasm, Golda Meir arrived to Moscow in September of 1948 as the first ambassador of Israel and was met with unprecedented joy in Moscow's synagogues and by Moscow's Jewish population in general. Immediately, as the national spirit of Soviet Jews rose and grew tremendously because of the Catastrophe, many of them began applying for relocation to Israel. Apparently, Stalin had expected that. Yet it turned out that many of

his citizens wished to run away en masse into, by all accounts, the pro-Western State of Israel. There, the influence and prestige of the United States grew, while the USSR was at the same time losing support of Arab countries. (Nevertheless, "the cooling of relations [with Israel] was mutual. Israel more and more often turned towards American Jewry which became its main support" (24).)

Probably because he was frightened by such a schism in the Jewish national feelings, Stalin drastically changed policies regarding Jews from the end of 1948 and for the rest of his remaining years. He began acting in his typical style — quietly but with determination, he struck to the core, but with only tiny movements visible on the surface.

Nevertheless, while the visible tiny ripples hardly mattered, Jewish leaders had many reasons to be concerned, as they felt the fear hanging in the air. The then editor of the Polish-Jewish newspaper Folkshtimme, Girsh Smolyar, recalled the "panic that seized Soviet communist Jews after the war." Emmanuel Kazakevitch and other Jewish writers were distressed. Smolyar had seen on Ehrenburg's table "a mountain of letters — literally scream of pain about current anti-Jewish attitudes throughout the country" (25).

Yet Ehrenburg knew his job very well and carried it out. (As became known much later, it was exactly then that the pre-publication copy of the Black Book compiled by I. Ehrenburg and B. Grossman, which described the mass killings and suffering of the Soviet Jews during the Soviet-German war, was destroyed.) In addition, on September 21, 1948, as a counterbalance to Golda Meir's triumphal arrival, Pravda published a large article commissioned by Ehrenburg which stated that the Jews are not a nation at all and that they are doomed to assimilate (26). This article created dismay not only among Soviet Jews, but also in America. With the start of the Cold War, "the discrimination against the Jews in the Soviet Union "became one of the main anti-Soviet trump cards of the West. (As was the inclination in the West towards various ethnic separatist movements in the USSR, a sympathy that had never previously gained support among Soviet Jews).

However, the EAK, which had been created to address war-time issues, continued gaining influence. By that time it listed approximately 70 members, had its own administrative apparatus, a newspaper and a publishing house. It functioned as a kind of spiritual and physical agent of all Soviet Jews before the CK (Central Committee) of the VKPb (all-Russian Communist Party of Bolsheviks), as well as before the West. "EAK executives were allowed to do and to have a lot — a decent salary, an opportunity to publish and collect royalties abroad, to receive and to redistribute gifts from abroad and, finally, to travel abroad." EAK became the crystallization center of an initially elitist and upper-echelon and then of a broadly growing Jewish national movement" (27), a burgeoning symbol of Jewish national autonomy. For Stalin, the EAK become a problem which had to be dealt with.

He started with the most important figure, the Head of the Soviet Information Bureau (Sovinformburo), Lozovsky, who, according to Feffer (who was vice-chairman of EAK since July 1945), was "the spiritual leader of the EAK… knew all about its activities and was its head for all practical purposes." In the summer of 1946, a special auditing commission from Agitprop of the CK [of the VKPb] inspected Sovinformburo and found that "the apparatus is polluted … [there is] an intolerable concentration of Jews." Lozovsky was ejected from his

post of Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs (just as Litvinov and Maisky had been) and in summer of 1947 he also lost his post as of Head of the Sovinformburo (28).

After that, the fate of the EAK was sealed. In September of 1946, the auditing commission from the Central Committee concluded that the EAK, instead of "leading a rigorous offensive ideological war against the Western and above all Zionist propaganda… supports the position of bourgeois Zionists and the Bund and in reality… it fights for the reactionary idea of a United Jewish nation." In 1947, the Central Committee stated, that "the work among the Jewish population of the Soviet Union is not a responsibility" of the EAK. "The EAK's job was to focus on the "decisive struggle against aggression by international reactionaries and their Zionist agents" (29).

However, these events coincided with the pro-Israel stance of the USSR and the EAK was not dissolved. On the other hand, EAK Chairman Mikhoels who was "the informal leader of Soviet Jewry, had to shed his illusions about the possibility of influencing the Kremlin's national policy via influencing the Dictator's relatives." Here, the suspicion fell mostly on Stalin's son—in-law Grigory Morozov. However, the most active help to the EAK was provided by Molotov's wife, P.S. Zhemchyzhina, who was arrested in the beginning of 1949, and Voroshilov's wife, "Ekaterina Davidovna (Golda Gorbman), a fanatic Bolshevik, who had been expelled from the synagogue in her youth." Abakumov reported that Mikhoels was suspected of "gathering private information about the Leader" (30). Overall, according to the MGB he "demonstrated excessive interest in the private life of the Head of the Soviet Government," while leaders of the EAK "gathered materials about the personal life of J. Stalin and his family at the behest of US Intelligence" (31). However, Stalin could not risk an open trial of the tremendously influential Mikhoels, so Mikhoels was murdered in January 1948 under the guise of an accident. Soviet Jewry was shocked and terrified by the demise of their spiritual leader.

The EAK was gradually dismantled after that. By the end of 1948 its premises were locked up, all documents were taken to Lubyanka, and its newspaper and the publishing house were closed. Feffer and Zuskin, the key EAK figures, were secretly arrested soon afterwards and these arrests were denied for a long time. In January 1949 Lozovsky was arrested, followed by the arrests of a number of other notable members of the EAK in February. They were intensively interrogated during 1949, but in 1950 the investigation stalled. (All this coincided [in accord with Stalin's understanding of balance] with the annihilation of the Russian nationalist tendencies in the leadership of the Leningrad government — the so-called "anti-party group of Kuznetsov-Rodionov-Popkov," but those developments, their repression and the significance of those events were largely overlooked by historians even though "about two thousand party functionaries were arrested and subsequently executed" (32) in 1950 in connection with the "Leningrad Affair").

In January 1948, Stalin ordered Jews to be pushed out of Soviet culture. In his usual subtle and devious manner, the "order" came through a prominent editorial in *Pravda*, seemingly dealing with a petty issue, "about one anti-Party group of theatrical critics" (33). (A more assertive article in *Kultura i Zhizn* followed on the next day (34)). The key point was the "decoding" of Russian the Russian pen-names of Jewish celebrities. In the USSR, "many Jews

camouflage their Jewish origins with such artifice," so that "it is impossible to figure out their real names" explains the editor of a modern Jewish journal (35).

This article in *Pravda* had a long but obscure pre-history. In 1946 reports of the Central Committee it was already noted "that out of twenty-eight highly publicized theatrical critics, only six are Russians. It implied that the majority of the rest were Jews." Smelling trouble, but still "supposing themselves to be vested with the highest trust of the Party, some theatrical critics, confident of victory, openly confronted Fadeev" in November 1946 (36). Fadeev was the all-powerful Head of the Union of Soviet Writers and Stalin's favorite. And so they suffered a defeat. Then the case stalled for a long time and only resurfaced in 1949.

The campaign rolled on through the newspapers and party meetings. G. Aronson, researching Jewish life "in Stalin's era" writes: "The goal of this campaign was to displace Jewish intellectuals from all niches of Soviet life. Informers were gloatingly revealing their pen-names. It turned out that E. Kholodov is actually Meyerovich, Jakovlev is Kholtsman, Melnikov is Millman, Jasny is Finkelstein, Vickorov is Zlochevsky, Svetov is Sheidman and so on. *Literaturnaya Gazeta* worked diligently on these disclosures" (37).

Undeniably, Stalin hit the worst-offending spot, the one that highly annoyed the public. However, Stalin was not so simple as to just blurt out "the Jews." From the first push at the "groups of theatrical critics" flowed a broad and sustained campaign against the "cosmopolitans" (with their Soviet inertial dim-wittedness they overused this innocent term and spoiled it). "Without exception, all 'cosmopolitans' under attack were Jews. They were being discovered everywhere. Because all of them were loyal Soviet citizens never suspected of anything anti-Soviet, they survived the great purges by Yezhov and Yagoda. Some were very experienced and influential people, sometimes eminent in their fields of expertise" (38). The exposure of "cosmopolitans" then turned into a ridiculous, even idiotic glorification of Russian "primacy" in all and every area of science, technology and culture.

Yet the "cosmopolitans" usually were not being arrested but instead were publicly humiliated, fired from publishing houses, ideological and cultural organizations, from TASS, from Glavlit, from literature schools, theaters, orchestras; some were expelled from the party and publication of their works was often discouraged.

And the public campaign was expanding, spreading into new fields and compromising new names. Anti-Jewish cleansing of "cosmopolitans" was conducted in the research institutes of the Academy of Science: Institute of Philosophy (with its long history of internecine feuding between different cliques), the institutes of Economy, Law, in the Academy of Social Sciences at the CK of the VKPb, in the School of Law (and then spread to the office of Public Prosecutor).

Thus, in the Department of History at MGU (Moscow State University), even a long-standing faithful communist and falsifier, I. I. Minz, member of the Academy, who enjoyed Stalin's personal trust and was awarded with Stalin Prizes and concurrently chaired historical departments in several universities, was labeled "the head of cosmopolitans in Historical Science." After that numerous scientific posts at MGU were 'liberated' from his former students and other Jewish professors (39).

Purges of Jews from technical fields and the natural sciences were gradually gaining momentum. "The end of 1945 and all of 1946 were relatively peaceful for the Jews of this particular social group." L. Mininberg studied Jewish contributions in Soviet science and industry during the war: "In 1946, the first serious blow since the end of the war was dealt to the administration and a big 'case' was fabricated. Its principal victims were mainly Russians…there were no Jews among them," though "investigation reports contained testaments against Israel Solomonovitch Levin, director of the Saratov Aviation Plant. He was accused on the charge that during the Battle for Stalingrad, two aviation regiments were not able to take off because of manufacturing defects in the planes produced by the plant. The charge was real, not made-up by the investigators. However, Levin was neither fired nor arrested." In 1946, "B.L. Vannikov, L.M. Kaganovich, S.Z. Ginzburg, L.Z. Mekhlis all kept their Ministry posts in the newly formed government… Almost all Jewish former deputy ministers also retained their positions as assistants to ministers." The first victims among the Jewish technical elite appeared only in 1947 (40).

In 1950, academic A. F. Ioffe "was forced to retire from the post of Director of the Physical-Engineering Institute, which he organized and headed since its inception in 1918." In 1951, 34 directors and 31 principal engineers of aviation plants had been fired. "This list contained mostly Jews." If in 1942 there were nearly forty Jewish directors and principal engineers in the Ministry of General Machine-Building (Ministry of Mortar Artillery) then only three remained by 1953. In the Soviet Army, "the Soviet authorities persecuted not only Jewish generals, but lower ranking officers working on the development of military technology and weaponry were also removed" (41).

Thus, the "purging campaigns" spread over to the defense, airplane construction, and automobile industries (though they did not affect the nuclear branch), primarily removing Jews from administrative, directorial and principal engineering positions; later purging was expanded onto various bureaucracies. Yet the genuine, ethnic denominator was never mentioned in the formal paperwork. Instead, the sacked officials faced charges of economic crimes or having relatives abroad at a time when conflict with the USA was expected, or other excuses were used. The purging campaigns rolled over the central cities and across the provinces. The methods of these campaigns were notoriously Soviet, in the spirit of 1930s: a victim was inundated in a vicious atmosphere of terror and as a result often tried to deflect the threat to himself by accusing others.

By repeating the tide of 1937, albeit in a milder form, the display of Soviet Power reminded the Jews that they had never become truly integrated and could be pushed aside at any moment. "We do not have indispensable people!" (However, "Lavrentiy Beria was tolerant of Jews. At least, in appointments to positions in government" (42).)

"'Pushing' Jews out of prestigious occupations that were crucial for the ruling elite in the spheres of manufacturing, administration, cultural and ideological activities, as well as limiting or completely barring the entrance of Jews into certain institutions of higher education gained enormous momentum in 1948-1953. … Positions of any importance in the KGB, party apparatus, and military were closed to the Jews, and quotas were in place for admission into certain educational institutions and cultural and scientific establishments" (43). Through its "fifth item" [i.e., the question about nationality] Soviet Jews were

oppressed by the very same method used in the Proletarian Questionnaire, other items of which were so instrumental in crushing the Russian nobility, clergy, intellectuals and all the rest of the "former people" since the 1920s.

"Although the highest echelon of the Jewish political elite suffered from administrative perturbations, surprisingly it was not as bad as it seemed," — concludes G. V. Kostyrchenko. "The main blow fell on the middle and the most numerous stratum of the Jewish elite — officials… and also journalists, professors and other members of the creative intelligentsia. … It was these, so to say, nominal Jews — the individuals with nearly complete lack of ethnic ties — who suffered the brunt of the cleansing of bureaucracies after the war" (44).

However, speaking of scientific cadres, the statistics are these: "at the end of the 1920s there were 13.6% Jews among scientific researchers in the country, in 1937 — 17.5%" (45), and by 1950 their proportion slightly decreased to 15.4% (25,125 Jews among 162,508 Soviet researchers) (46). S. Margolina, looking back from the end of the 1980s concludes that, despite the scale of the campaign, after the war, "the number of highly educated Jews in high positions always remained disproportionally high. But, in contrast with the former "times of happiness," it certainly had decreased" (47). A.M. Kheifetz recalls "a memoir article of a member of the Academy, Budker, one of the fathers of the Soviet A-bomb" where he described how they were building the first Soviet A-bomb — being exhausted from the lack of sleep and fainting from stress and overwork — and it is precisely those days of persecution of "cosmopolitans" that were "the most inspired and the happiest" in his life (48).

In 1949 "among Stalin Prize laureates no less than 13% were Jews, just like in the previous years." By 1952 there were only 6% (49). Data on the number of Jewish students in USSR were not published for nearly a quarter of century, from the pre-war years until 1963. We will examine those in the next chapter.

The genuine Jewish culture that had been slowly reviving after the war was curtailed and suppressed in 1948-1951. Jewish theatres were no longer subsidized and the few remaining ones were closed, along with book publishing houses, newspapers and bookstores (50). In 1949, the international radio broadcasting in Yiddish was also discontinued (51).

In the military, "by 1953 almost all Jewish generals" and "approximately 300 colonels and lieutenant colonels were forced to resign from their positions" (52).

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As the incarcerated Jewish leaders remained jailed in Lubyanka for over three years, Stalin slowly and with great caution proceeded in dismantling the EAK. He was very well aware what kind of international storm would be triggered by using force. (Luckily, though, he acquired his first H-bomb in 1949.) On the other hand, he fully appreciated the significance of unbreakable ties between world Jewry and America, his enemy since his rejection of the Marshall Plan.

Investigation of EAK activities was reopened in January 1952. The accused were charged with connections to the "Jewish nationalist organizations in America," with providing

"information regarding the economy of the USSR" to those organizations… and also with "plans of repopulating Crimea and creating a Jewish Republic there" (53). Thirteen defendants were found guilty and sentenced to death: S. A. Lozovsky, I. S. Ysefovich, B. A. Shimeliovich, V. L. Zuskin, leading Jewish writers D.R. Bergelson, P. D. Marshik, L. M. Kvitko, I. S. Feffer, D. N. Gofshtein, and also L. Y. Talmi, I. S. Vatenberg, C. S. Vatenberg — Ostrovsky, and E. I. Teumin (54). They were secretly executed in August. (Ehrenburg, who was also a member of the EAK, was not even arrested. (He assumed it was pure luck.) Similarly, the crafty David Zaslavsky survived also. And even after the execution of the Jewish writers, Ehrenburg continued to reassure the West that those writers were still alive and writing (55). The annihilation of the Jewish Antifascist Committee went along with similar secret "daughter" cases; 110 people were arrested, 10 of them were executed and 5 died during the investigation (56).

In autumn of 1952 Stalin went into the open as arrests among Jews began, such as arrests of Jewish professors of medicine and among members of literary circles in Kiev in October 1952. This information immediately spread among Soviet Jews and throughout the entire world. On October 17th, *Voice of America* broadcast about "mass repressions" among Soviet Jews (57). Soviet "Jews were frozen by mortal fear" (58).

Soon afterwards in November in Prague, a show trial of Slansky, the Jewish First Secretary of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, and several other top state and party leaders took place in a typically loud and populist Stalinist-type entourage. The trial was openly anti-Jewish with naming "world leading" Jews such as Ben Gurion and Morgenthau, and placing them in league with American leaders Truman and Acheson. The outcome was that eleven were hanged, eight Jews among them. Summing up the official version, K. Gotwald said: "This investigation and court trial … disclosed a new channel through which treason and espionage permeated the Communist Party. This is Zionism" (59).

At the same time, since summer of 1951, the development of the "Doctors' Plot" was gaining momentum. The case included the accusation of prominent physicians, doctors to the Soviet leadership, for the criminal treatment of state leaders. For the secret services such an accusation was nothing new, as similar accusations had been made against Professor D. D. Pletnev and physicians L. G. Levin and I. N. Kazakov already during the "Bukharin trial" in 1937. At that time, the gullible Soviet public gasped at such utterly evil plots. No one had any qualms about repeating the same old scenario.

Now we know much more about the "Doctors' Plot." Initially it was not entirely an anti-Jewish action; the prosecution list contained the names of several prominent Russian physicians as well. In essence, the affair was fueled by Stalin's generally psychotic state of mind, with his fear of plots and mistrust of the doctors, especially as his health deteriorated. By September 1952 prominent doctors were arrested in groups. Investigations unfolded with cruel beatings of suspects and wild accusations; slowly it turned into a version of "spying-terroristic plot connected with foreign intelligence organizations," "American hirelings," "saboteurs in white coats," "bourgeois nationalism" — all indicating that it was primary aimed at Jews. (Robert Conquest in *The Great Terror* follows this particular tragic line of involvement of highly placed doctors. In 1935, the false death certificate of Kuibyshev was signed by doctors G. Kaminsky, I. Khodorovsky, and L. Levin. In 1937 they signed a similarly

false death certificate of Ordzhonikidze. They knew so many deadly secrets — could they expect anything but their own death? Conquest writes that Dr. Levin had cooperated with the Cheka since 1920. "Working with Dzerzhinsky, Menzhinsky, and Yagoda. … [he] was trusted by the head of such an organization. … It is factually correct to consider Levin… a member of Yagoda's circle in the NKVD." Further, we read something sententious: "Among those outstanding doctors who [in 1937] moved against [Professor of Medicine] Pletnev and who had signed fierce accusative resolutions against him, we find the names of M. Vovsi, B. Kogan and V. Zelenin, who in their turn… were subjected to torture by the MGB in 1952-53 in connection with "the case of doctor-saboteurs," "as well as two other doctors, N. Shereshevky and V. Vinogradov who provided a pre-specified death certificate of Menzhinsky" (60).)

On January 3, 1953 *Pravda* and *Izvestiya* published an announcement by TASS about the arrest of a "group of doctors-saboteurs." The accusation sounded like a grave threat for Soviet Jewry, and, at the same time, by a degrading Soviet custom, prominent Soviet Jews were forced to sign a letter to *Pravda* with the most severe condemnation of the wiles of the Jewish "bourgeois nationalists" and their approval of Stalin's government. Several dozen signed the letter. (Among them were Mikhail Romm, D. Oistrakh, S. Marshak, L. Landau, B. Grossman, E. Gilels, I. Dunayevsky and others. Initially Ehrenburg did not sign it — he found the courage to write a letter to Stalin: "to ask your advice." His resourcefulness was unsurpassed indeed. To Ehrenburg, it was clear that "there is no such thing as the Jewish nation" and that assimilation is the only way and that Jewish nationalism "inevitably leads to betrayal." Yet that the letter that was offered to him to sign could be invidiously inferred by the "enemies of our country." He concluded that "I myself cannot resolve these questions," but if "leading comrades will let me know … [that my signature] is desired … [and] useful for protecting our homeland and for peace in the world, I will sign it immediately" (61).)

The draft of that statement of loyalty was painstakingly prepared in the administration of the Central Committee and eventually its style became softer and more respectful. However, this letter never appeared in the press. Possibly because of the international outrage, the "Doctors' Plot" apparently began to slow down in the last days of Stalin (62).

After the public announcement, the "'Doctors' Plot' created a huge wave of repression of Jewish physicians all over the country. In many cities and towns, the offices of State Security began fabricating criminal cases against Jewish doctors. They were afraid to even go to work, and their patients were afraid to be treated by them" (63).

After the "cosmopolitan" campaign, the menacing growl of "people's anger" in reaction to the "Doctors' Plot" utterly terrified many Soviet Jews, and a rumor arose (and then got rooted in the popular mind) that Stalin was planning a mass eviction of Jews to the remote parts of Siberia and North — a fear reinforced by the examples of postwar deportation of entire peoples. In his latest work G. Kostyrchenko, a historian and a scrupulous researcher of Stalin's "Jewish" policies, very thoroughly refutes this "myth of deportation," proving that it had never been confirmed, either then or subsequently by any facts, and even in principle such a deportation would not have been possible (64).

But it is amazing how bewildered were those circles of Soviet Jews, who were unfailingly loyal to the Soviet-Communist ideology. Many years later, S. K. told me: "There is no single

action in my life that I am as ashamed of as my belief in the genuineness of the "Doctors' Plot" of 1953! — that they, perhaps involuntarily, were involved a foreign conspiracy…"

An article from the 1960s states that "in spite of a pronounced anti-Semitism of Stalin's rule … many [Jews] prayed that Stalin stayed alive, as they knew through experience that any period of weak power means a slaughter of Jews. We were well aware of the quite rowdy mood of the 'fraternal nations' toward us" (65).

On February 9th a bomb exploded at the Soviet embassy in Tel Aviv. On February 11, 1953 the USSR broke off diplomatic relations with Israel. The conflict surrounding the "Doctors' Plot" intensified due to these events.

And then Stalin went wrong, and not for the first time, right? He did not understand how the thickening of the plot could threaten him personally, even within the secure quarters of his inaccessible political Olympus. The explosion of international anger coincided with the rapid action of internal forces, which could possibly have done away with Stalin. It could have happened through Beria (for example, according to Avtorhanov's version (66).)

After a public communiqué about the "Doctors' Plot" Stalin lived only 51 days. "The release from custody and the acquittal of the doctors without trial were perceived by the older generation of Soviet Jews as a repetition of the Purim miracle": Stalin had perished on the day of Purim, when Esther saved the Jews of Persia from Haman (67).

On April 3 all the surviving accused in the "Doctors' Plot" were released. It was publicly announced the next day.

And yet again it was the Jews who pushed the frozen history forward.

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Chapter 23: Before the Six-Day War

On the next day after Stalin's death, on March 6, the MGB (Ministry of State Security) "ceased to exist", albeit only formally, as Beria had incorporated it into his own Ministry of Interior Affairs (MVD). This move allowed him "to disclose the abuses" by the MGB, including those of the still publicly unanounced MGB Minister, Ignatiev (who secretly replaced Abakumov). It seems that after 1952 Beria was losing Stalin's trust and had been gradually pushed out by Ignatiev-Ryumin during the `Doctors' Plot´. Thus, by force of circumstances, Beria became a magnet for the new anti-Stalin opposition. And now, on April 4, just a month after Stalin's death, he enjoyed enough power to dismiss the "Doctors' Plot" and accuse Ryumin of its fabrication. Then three months later the diplomatic relations with Israel were restored.

All this reinvigorated hope among the Soviet Jews, as the rise of Beria could be very promising for them. However, Beria was soon ousted.

Yet because of the usual Soviet inertia, "with the death of Stalin … many previously fired Jews were reinstalled in their former positions"; "during the period called the "thaw", many old Zionists … were released from the camps"; "during the post-Stalin period, the first Zionist groups started to emerge - initially at local levels."[1]

Yet once again the things began to turn unfavorably for the Jews. In March 1954, the Soviet Union vetoed the UN Security Council attempt to open the Suez Canal to Israeli ships. At the end of 1955, Khrushchev declared a pro-Arab, anti-Israel turn of Soviet foreign policy. In February 1956, in his famous report at the 20th Party Congress, Khrushchev, while speaking profusely about the massacres of 1937-1938, did not point any attention to the fact that there were so many Jews among the victims; he did not name Jewish leaders executed in 1952; and when speaking of the "Doctors' Plot," he did not stress that it was specifically directed against the Jews. "It is easy to imagine the bitter feelings this aroused among the Jews," they "swept the Jewish communist circles abroad and even the leadership of those Communist parties, where Jews constituted a significant percentage of members (such as in the Canadian and US Communist parties)."[2] In April 1956 in Warsaw, under the communist regime (though with heavy Jewish influence), the Jewish newspaper *Volksstimme* published a sensational article, listing the names of Jewish cultural and social celebrities who perished from 1937-1938 and from 1948-1952. Yet at the same time the article also condemned the "capitalist enemies", "Beria's period" and welcomed the return of "Leninist national policy." "The article in *Volksstimme* had unleashed a storm."[3]

International communist organizations and Jewish social circles loudly began to demand an explanation from the Soviet leaders. "Throughout 1956, foreign visitors to the Soviet Union openly asked about Jewish situation there, and particularly why the Soviet government has not yet abandoned the dark legacy of Stalinism on the Jewish question?"[4] It became a recurrent theme for the foreign correspondents and visiting delegations of "fraternal communist parties". (Actually, that could be the reason for the loud denouncement in the Soviet press of the "betrayal" of Communism by Howard Fast, an American writer and former enthusiastic champion of Communism. Meanwhile, "hundreds of Soviet Jews from different cities in one form or another participated in meetings of resurgent Zionist groups

and coteries"; "old Zionists with connections to relatives or friends in Israel were active in those groups."[5]

In May 1956, a delegation from the French Socialist Party arrived in Moscow. "Particular attention was paid to the situation of Jews in the Soviet Union."[6] Khrushchev found himself in a hot corner – now he could not afford to ignore the questions, yet he knew, especially after experiencing postwar Ukraine, that the Jews are not likely to be returned to their [high] social standing like in 1920s and 1930s. He replied: "In the beginning of the revolution, we had many Jews in executive bodies of party and government …. After that, we have developed new cadres …. If Jews wanted to occupy positions of leadership in our republics today, it would obviously cause discontent among the local people …. If a Jew, appointed to a high office, surrounds himself with Jewish colleagues, it naturally provokes envy and hostility toward all Jews." (The French publication *Socialist Herald* calls "strange" and "false" the Khrushchev's point about "surrounding himself with Jewish colleagues".) In the same discussion, when Jewish culture and schools were addressed, Khrushchev explained that "if Jewish schools were established, there probably would not be many prospective students. The Jews are scattered all over the country …. If the Jews were required to attend a Jewish school, it certainly would cause outrage. It would be understood as a kind of a ghetto."[7]

Three months later, in August 1956, a delegation of the Canadian Communist Party visited the USSR – and it stated outright that it had "a special mission to achieve clarity on the Jewish question". Thus, in the postwar years, the Jewish question was becoming a central concern of the western communists. "Khrushchev rejected all accusations of anti-Semitism as a slander against him and the party." He named a number of Soviet Jews to important posts, "he even mentioned his Jewish daughter-in-law," but then he "quite suddenly … switched to the issue of "good and bad features of each nation" and pointed out "several negative features of Jews", among which he mentioned "their political unreliability." Yet he neither mentioned any of their positive traits, nor did he talk about other nations.[8]

In the same conversation, Khrushchev expressed his agreement with Stalin's decision against establishing a Crimean Jewish Republic, stating that such [Jewish] colonization of the Crimea would be a strategic military risk for the Soviet Union. This statement was particularly hurtful to the Jewish community. The Canadian delegation insisted on publication of a specific statement by the Central Committee of Communist Party of the Soviet Union about the sufferings of Jews, "but it was met with firm refusal" as "other nations and republics, which also suffered from Beria's crimes against their culture and intelligentsia, would ask with astonishment why this statement covers only Jews?" (S. Schwartz dismissively comments: "The pettiness of this argumentation is striking."[9])

Yet it did not end at that. "Secretly, influential foreign Jewish communists tried" to obtain "explanations about the fate of the Jewish cultural elite", and in October of the same year, twenty-six Western "progressive Jewish leaders and writers" appealed publicly to Prime-Minister Bulganin and "President" Voroshilov, asking them to issue "a public statement about injustices committed [against Jews] and the measures the goverment had designed to restore the Jewish cultural institutions."[10]

Yet during both the "interregnum" of 1953-1957 and then in Khrushchev's period, the Soviet policies toward Jews were inconsistent, wary, circumspect and ambivalent, thus sending signals in all directions.

In particular, the summer of 1956, which was filled with all kinds of social expectations in general, had also became the apogee of Jewish hopes. One Surkov, the head of the Union of Writers, in a conversation with a communist publisher from New York City mentioned plans to establish a new Jewish publishing house, theater, newspaper and quarterly literary magazine; there were also plans to organize a countrywide conference of Jewish writers and cultural celebrities. It also noted that a commission for reviving the Jewish literature in Yiddish had been already established. In 1956, "many Jewish writers and journalists gathered in Moscow again."[11] The Jewish activists later recalled that "the optimism inspired in all of us by the events of 1956 did not quickly fade away."[12]

Yet the Soviet government continued with its meaningless and aimless policies, discouraging any development of an independent Jewish culture. It is likely that Khrushchev himself was strongly opposed to it.

And then came new developments - the Suez Crisis, where Israel, Britain and France allied in attacking Egypt ("Israel is heading to suicide," formidably warned the Soviet press), and the Hungarian Uprising, with its anti-Jewish streak, nearly completely concealed by history,[13] (resulting, perhaps, from the overrepresentation of Jews in the Hungarian KGB). (Could this be also one of the reasons, even if a minor one, for the complete absence of Western support for the rebellion? Of course, at this time the West was preoccupied with the Suez Crisis. And yet wasn't it a signal to the Soviets suggesting that it would be better if the Jewish theme be kept hushed?)

Then, a year later, Khrushchev finally overpowered his highly placed enemies within the party and, among others, Kaganovitch was cast down.

Could it really be such a big deal? The latter was not the only one ousted and even then, he was not the principal figure among the dethroned; and he was definitely not thrown out because of his Jewishness. Yet "from the Jewish point of view, his departure symbolized the end of an era". Some looked around and counted – "the Jews disappeared not only from the ruling sections of the party, but also from the leading governmental circles."[14]

It was time to pause and ponder thoroughly – what did the Jews really think about *such* new authorities?

David Burg, who emigrated from the USSR in 1956, came upon a formula on how the Jews should treat the Soviet rule. (It proved quite useful for the authorities): "To some, the danger of anti-Semitism `from below´ seems greater than the danger of anti-Semitism `from above´"; "though the government oppresses us, it nevertheless allows us to exist. If, however, a revolutionary change comes, then during the inevitable anarchy of the transition period we will simply be exterminated. Therefore, let's hold on to the government no matter how bad it is."[15]

We repeatedly encountered similar concerns in the 1930s - that the Jews should support the Bolshevik power in the USSR because without it their fate would be even worse. And now, even though the Soviet power had further deteriorated, the Jews had no other choice but hold on to it as before.

The Western world and particularly the United States always heeded such recommendations, even during the most strained years of the Cold War. In addition, socialist Israel was still full of communist sympathizers and could forgive the Soviet Union a lot for its role in the defeat of Hitler. Yet how then could Soviet anti-Semitism be interpreted? In this aspect, the recommendation of D. Burg stood up to the acute "social demand" – to move emphasis from the anti-Semitism of the Soviet government to the "anti-Semitism of the Russian people" – that ever-present curse.

So now some Jews have even fondly recalled the long-disbanded YevSek [the "Jewish Section" of the Central Committee, dismantled in 1930 when Dimanshtein and its other leaders were shot]. Even though back in the 1920s it seemed overly pro-Communist, the YevSek was "to certain extent a guardian of Jewish national interests … an organ that produced some positive work as well."[16]

In the meantime, Khrushchev's policy remained equivocal; it is reasonable to assume that though Khrushchev himself did not like Jews, he did not want to fight against them, realizing the international political counter-productivity of such an effort. In 1957-1958, Jewish musical performances and public literary clubs were authorized and appeared in many cities countrywide. (For example, "in 1961, Jewish literary soirees and Jewish song performances were attended by about 300,000 people."[17]) Yet at the same time, the circulation of Warsaw's *Volksstimme* was discontinued in the Soviet Union, thus cutting the Soviet Jews off from an outside source of Jewish information.[18] In 1954, after a long break, Sholom Aleichem's *The Adventures of Mottel* was again published in Russian, followed by several editions of his other books and their translations into other languages; in 1959 a large edition of his collected works was produced as well. In 1961 in Moscow, the Yiddish magazine *Sovetish Heymland* was established (though it strictly followed the official policy line). Publications of books by Jewish authors, who were executed in Stalin's times, were resumed in Yiddish and Russian, and one even could hear Jewish tunes on the broadcasts of the All-Soviet Union radio.[19] By 1966, "about one hundred Jewish authors were writing in Yiddish in the Soviet Union," and "almost all of the named authors simultaneously worked as Russian language journalists and translators," and "many of them worked as teachers in the Russian schools."[20] However, the Jewish theater did not re-open until 1966. In 1966, S. Schwartz defined the Jewish situation [in the USSR] as "cultural orphanhood."[21] Yet another author bitterly remarks: "The general lack of enthusiasm and interest … from the wider Jewish population … toward those cultural undertakings … cannot be explained solely by official policies …." "With rare exceptions, during those years the Jewish actors performed in half-empty halls. Books of Jewish writers were not selling well."[22]

Similarly ambivalent, but more hostile policies of the Soviet authorities in Khrushchev's period were implemented against the Jewish religion. It was a part of Khrushchev's general anti-religious assault; it is well known how devastating it was for the Russian Orthodox Church. Since the 1930s, not a single theological school functioned in the USSR. In 1957 a

yeshiva – a school for training rabbis – opened in Moscow. It accommodated only 35 students, and even those were being consistently pushed out under various pretexts such as withdrawal of residence registration in Moscow. Printing of prayer books and manufacturing of religious accessories was hindered. Up to 1956, before the Jewish Passover matzah was baked by state-owned bakeries and then sold in stores. Beginning in 1957, however, baking of matzah was obstructed and since 1961 it was banned outright almost everywhere. One day, the authorities would not interfere with receiving parcels with matzah from abroad, another day, they stopped the parcels at the customs, and even demanded recipients to express in the press their outrage against the senders.[23] In many places, synagogues were closed down. "In 1966, only 62 synagogues were functioning in the entire Soviet Union."[24] Yet the authorities did not dare to shut down the synagogues in Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev and in the capitals of the republics. In the 1960s, there used to be extensive worship services on holidays with large crowds of 10,000 to 15,000 on the streets around synagogues.[25] C. Schwartz notes that in the 1960s Jewish religious life was in severe decline, yet he large-mindedly reminds us that it was the result of the long process of secularization that began in Russian Jewry in the late 19th Century. (The process, which, he adds, has also succeeded in extremely non-communist Poland between the First and Second World Wars.[26]) Judaism in the Soviet Union lacked a united control center; yet when the Soviet authorities wanted to squeeze out a political show from the leading rabbis for foreign policy purposes, be it about the well-being of Judaism in the USSR or outrage against the nuclear war, the government was perfectly able to stage it.[27] "The Soviet authorities had repeatedly used Jewish religious leaders for foreign policy goals." For example, "in November 1956 a group of rabbis issued a protest against" the actions of Israel during the Suez War.[28]

Another factor, which aggravated the status of Judaism in the USSR after the Suez War, was the growing fashionability of what was termed the "struggle against Zionism." Zionism, being, strictly speaking, a form of socialism, should naturally had been seen as a true brother to the party of Marx and Lenin. Yet after the mid-1950s, the decision to secure the friendship of the Arabs drove the Soviet leaders toward persecution of Zionism. However, for the Soviet masses Zionism was a distant, unfamiliar and abstract phenomenon. Therefore, to flesh out this struggle, to give it a distinct embodiment, the Soviet government presented Zionism as a caricature composed of the characteristic and eternal Jewish images. The books and pamphlets allegedly aimed against Zionism also contained explicit anti-Judaic and anti-Jewish messages. If in the Soviet Union of 1920-1930s Judaism was not as brutally persecuted as the Russian Orthodox Christianity, then in 1957 a foreign socialist commentator noted how that year signified "a decisive intensification of the struggle against Judaism," the "turning point in the struggle against the Jewish religion," and that "the character of struggle betrays that it is directed not only against Judaism, but against the Jews in general."[29] There was one stirring episode: in 1963 in Kiev, the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences published 12,000 copies of a brochure *Unadorned Judaism* in Ukrainian, yet it was filled with such blatant anti-Jewish caricatures that it provoked a large-scale international outcry, joined even by the communist "friends" (who were financially supported by Moscow), such as the leaders of the American and British communist parties, newspapers *L'Humanite*, *L'Unita*, as well as a pro-Chinese communist newspaper from Brussels, and many others. The UN Human Rights Commission demanded an explanation from its Ukrainian representative. The World Jewish Cultural Association called for the prosecution of the author and the cartoonist. The Soviet side held on for awhile, insisting that except for the drawings, "the

book deserves a generally positive assessment."[30] Finally, even *Pravda* had to admit that it was indeed "an ill-prepared … brochure" with "erroneous statements … and illustrations that may offend feelings of religious people or be interpreted as anti-Semitic," a phenomenon that, "as is universally known, does not and cannot exist in our country."[31] Yet at the same time *Izvestia* stated that although there were certain drawbacks to the brochure, "its main idea … is no doubt right."[32]

There were even several arrests of religious Jews from Moscow and Leningrad – accused of "espionage [conversations during personal meetings in synagogues] for a capitalistic state [Israel]" with synagogues allegedly used as "fronts for various criminal activities"[33] – to scare others more effectively.

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Although there were already no longer any Jews in the most prominent positions, many still occupied influential and important second-tier posts (though there were exceptions: for example, Veniamin Dymshits smoothly ran Gosplan (the State Planning Committee) from 1962, while being at the same time the Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of USSR and a member of Central Committee from 1961 to 1986[34]). Why, at one time the Jews were joining "NKVD and the MVD … in such numbers that even now, after all purges of the very Jewish spirit, a few individuals miraculously remained, such as the famous Captain Joffe in a camp in Mordovia."[35]

According to the USSR Census of 1959, 2,268,000 Jews lived in the Soviet Union. (Yet there were caveats regarding this figure: "Everybody knows … that there are more Jews in the Soviet Union than the Census showed," as on the Census day, a Jew states his nationality not according to his passport, but any nationality he wishes.[36]) Of those, 2,162,000 Jews lived in the cities, i.e., 95,3% of total population – much more than 82% in 1926 or 87% in 1939.[37] And if we glance forward into the 1970 Census, the observed "increase in the number of Jews in Moscow and Leningrad is apparently caused not by natural growth but by migration from other cities (in spite of all the residential restrictions)." Over these 11 years, "at least several thousand Jews relocated to Kiev. The concentration of Jews in the large cities had been increasing for many decades."[38]

These figures are very telling for those who know about the differences in living standards between the urban and the rural populations in the Soviet Union. G. Rosenblum, the editor of the prominent Israeli newspaper, *Yedioth Ahronoth*, recalls an almost anecdotal story by Israeli Ambassador to Moscow Dr. Harel about his tour of the USSR in the mid-1960s. In a large kolkhoz near Kishinev he was told that "the Jews who work here want to meet [him]. [The Israeli] was very happy that there were Jews in the kolkhoz" (love of agriculture - a good sign for Israel). He recounts: "Three Jews came to meet me … one was a cashier, another – editor of the kolkhoz's wall newspaper and the third one was a kind of economic manager. I couldn't find any other. So, what the Jews used to do [i.e. before], they are still doing." G. Rosenblum confirms this: "Indeed, the Soviet Jews in their masses did not take to the physical work."[39] L. Shapiro concludes, "Conversion of Jews to agriculture ended in failure despite all the efforts … of public Jewish organizations and … the assistance of the state."[40]

In Moscow, Leningrad and Kiev – the cities enjoying the highest living and cultural standards in the country, the Jews, according to the 1959 Census, constituted 3.9%, 5.8%, and 13.9 % of the population, respectively, which is quite a lot, considering that they accounted only for 1.1% of the entire population of the USSR.[41]

So it was that this extremely high concentration of Jews in urban areas – 95% of all Soviet Jews lived in the cities – that made "the system of prohibitions and restrictions" particularly painful for them. (As we mentioned in the previous chapter, this system was outlined back in the early 1940s.) And "although the restrictive rules have never been officially acknowledged and officials stoutly denied their existence, these rules and restrictions very effectively barred the Jews from many spheres of action, professions and positions."[42]

Some recall a disturbing rumor circulating then among the Jews: allegedly, Khrushchev said in one of his unpublished speeches that "as many Jews will be accepted into the institutions of higher education as work in the coal mines."[43] Perhaps, he really just blurted it out in his usual manner, because such "balancing" was never carried out. Yet by the beginning of 1960s, while the absolute number of Jewish students increased, their relative share decreased substantially when compared to the pre-war period: if in 1936 the share of Jews among students was 7.5 times higher than that in the total population[44], then by 1960s it was only 2.7 times higher. These new data on the distribution of students in higher and secondary education by nationality were published for the first time (in the post-war period) in 1963 in the statistical annual report, *The National Economy of the USSR,*[45] and a similar table was annually produced up to 1972. In terms of the absolute number of students in institutions of higher education and technical schools in the 1962-1963 academic year, Jews were fourth after the three Slavic nations (Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians), with 79,300 Jewish students in institutions of higher education out of a total 2,943,700 students (2.69%). In the next academic year 1963-1964, the number of Jewish students increased to 82,600, while the total number of students in the USSR reached 3,260,700 (2.53%). This share remained almost constant until the 1969-1970 academic year; 101,000 Jewish students out of total 4,549,900. Then the Jewish share began to decline and in 1972-1973 it was 1.91%: 88,500 Jewish students out of total 4,630,246. (This decline coincided with the beginning of the Jewish immigration to Israel.)

The relative number of Jewish scientists also declined in 1960s, from 9.5% in 1960 to 6.1% in 1973.[47] During those same years, "there were tens of thousands Jewish names in the Soviet art and literature,"[48] including 8.5% of writers and journalists, 7.7% of actors and artists, more than 10% of judges and attorneys, and about 15% doctors.[49] Traditionally, there were always many Jews in medicine, yet consider the accursed "Soviet psychiatry," which in those years began locking up healthy people in mental institutions. And who were those psychiatrists? Listing the "Jewish occupations," M.I. Heifets writes: "`Psychiatry is a Jewish monopoly,´ a friend, a Jewish psychiatrist, told me, just before [my] arrest; `we began to get Russians only recently and even then as the result of an order´" [translator's note: admission into medical residency training was regulated at local and central levels; here author indicates that admission of ethnically Russian doctors into advanced psychiatry training was mandated from the higher levels]. He provides examples: the Head Psychiatrist of Leningrad, Professor Averbukh, provides his expertise for the KGB in the "Big House"; in Moscow there was famous Luntz; in the Kaluga Hospital there was Lifshitz and "his Jewish gang." When

Heifetz was arrested, and his wife began looking for a lawyer with a "clearance," that is, with a permission from the KGB to work on political cases, she "did not find a single Russian" among them as all such lawyers were Jews[50]).

In 1956, Furtseva, then the First Secretary of Moscow Gorkom (the City's Party Committee), complained that in some offices Jews constitute more than half of the staff.[51] (I have to note for balance that *in those* years the presence of Jews in the Soviet apparatus was not detrimental. The Soviet legal machinery was in its essence stubbornly and hardheartedly anti-human, skewed against any man in need, be it a petitioner or just a visitor. So it often happened that the Russian officials in Soviet offices, petrified by their power, looked for any excuse to triumphantly turn away a visitor; in contrast, one could find much more understanding in a Jewish official and resolve an issue in a more humane way). L. Shapiro provides examples of complaints that in the national republics, the Jews were pushed out and displaced from the bureaucratic apparatus by native intelligentsia[52] – yet it was a common and officially-mandated system of preferences in the ethnic republics [to affirm the local cadres], and Russians were displaced just as well.

This reminds me of an example from contemporary American life. In 1965, the New York Division of the American Jewish Committee had conducted a four-months-long unofficial interview of more than a thousand top officials in New York City banks. Based on its results, the American Jewish Committee mounted a protest because less than 3% of those surveyed were Jews, though they constituted one quarter of the population of – that is, the Committee demanded *proportional representation*. Then the chairman of the Association of Banks of New York responded that banks, according to law, do not hire on the basis of "race, creed, color or national origin" and do not keep records of such categories (that would be our accursed "fifth article" [the requirement in the Soviet internal passport - "nationality"]!). (Interestingly, the same American Jewish Committee had conducted a similar study about the ethnic composition of management of the fifty largest U.S. public utility services two years before, and in 1964 it in similar vein it studied industrial enterprises in the Philadelphia region.)[53]

Yet let us return to the Soviet Jews. Many Jewish emigrants loudly advertised their former activity in the periodical-publishing and film-making industries back in the USSR. In particular, we learn from a Jewish author that "it was due to his [Syrokomskiy's] support that all top positions in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* became occupied by Jews."[54]

Yet twenty years later we read a different assessment of the time: "The new anti-Semitism grew stronger … and by the second half of the 1960s it already amounted to a developed system of discreditation, humiliation and isolation of the entire people."[55]

So how can we reconcile such conflicting views? How can we reach a calm and balanced assessment?

Then from the high spheres inhabited by economic barons there came alarming signals, signals that made the Jews nervous. "To a certain extent, Jewish activity in the Soviet Union concentrated in the specific fields of economy along a characteristic pattern, well-known to Jewish sociologists."[56] By then, at the end of 1950s, Nikita [Khrushchev] suddenly realized that the key spheres of the Soviet economy are plagued by rampant theft and fraud.

"In 1961, an explicitly anti-Semitic campaign was initiated against the ?theft of socialist property."[57] Beginning in 1961, a number of punitive decrees of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR were passed. The first one dealt with "foreign currency speculations," another – with bribes, and still another later introduced capital punishment for the aforementioned crimes, at the same time lawlessly applying the death penalty retroactively, for the crimes committed before those decrees were issued (as, for example, the case of J. Rokotov and B. Faybishenko). Executions started in the very first year. During the first nine trials, eleven individuals were sentenced to death – among them were "perhaps, six Jews."[58] *The Jewish Encyclopedia* states it more specifically, "In 1961-1964, thirty-nine Jews were executed for economic crimes in the RSFSR and seventy-nine – in Ukraine," and forty-three Jews in other republics.[59] In these trials, "the vast majority of defendants were Jews." (The publicity was such that the court reports indicated the names and patronymics of the defendants, which was the normal order of pleadings, yet it was getting "absolutely clear from that that they were Jews."[60])

Next, in a large court trial in Frunze in 1962, nineteen out of forty-six defendants were apparently Jewish. "There is no reason to think that this new policy was conceived as a system of anti-Jewish measures. Yet immediately upon enforcement, the new laws acquired distinct anti-Jewish flavor," - the author of the quote obviously points out to the publication of the full names of defendants, including Jewish ones; other than that, neither the courts, nor the government, nor the media made any generalizations or direct accusations against the Jews. And even when *Sovetskaya Kyrgizia* wrote that "they occupied different posts, but they were closely linked to each other," it never clarified the begged question "how were they linked?" The newspaper treated this issue with silence, thus pushing the reader to the thought that the nucleus of the criminal organization was composed of the "closely linked" individuals. Yet "closely linked by" what? By their Jewishness. So the newspaper "emphasized the Jews in this case."[61] … Yet people can be "closely linked" by any illegal transaction, greed, swindling or fraud. And, amazingly, nobody argued that those individuals could be innocent (though they could have been innocent). Yet to *name* them was equal to Jew-baiting.

Next, in January 1962, came the Vilnius case of speculators in foreign currency. *All* eight defendants were Jews (during the trial, non-Jewish members of the political establishment involved in the case escaped public naming – a usual Soviet trick). This time, there was an explicit anti-Jewish sentiment from the prosecution: "The deals were struck in a synagogue, and the arguments were settled with the help of wine."[62]

S. Schwartz is absolutely convinced that this legal and economic harassment was nothing else but rampant anti-Semitism, yet he completely disregards "the tendency of Jews to concentrate their activity in the specific spheres of economy." Similarly, the entire Western media interpreted this as a brutal campaign against Jews, the *humiliation and isolation of the entire people*; Bertrand Russell sent a letter of protest to Khrushchev and got a personal response from the Soviet leader.[63] However, after that, the Soviet authorities apparently had second thoughts when they handled the Jews.

In the West, the official Soviet anti-Semitism began to be referred to as "the most pressing issue" in the USSR (ignoring any more acute issues) and "the most proscribed subject."

(Though there were numerous other proscribed issues such as forced collectivization or the surrender of three million Red Army soldiers in the year of 1941 alone, or the murderous nuclear "experimentation" on our own Soviet troops on the Totskoye range in 1954.) Of course, after Stalin's death, the Communist Party avoided explicit anti-Jewish statements. Perhaps, they practiced incendiary "invitation-only meetings" and "briefings" – that would have been very much in the Soviet style. Solomon Schwartz rightly concludes: "Soviet anti-Jewish policy does not have any sound or rational foundation," the strangulation of the Jewish cultural life "appears puzzling. How can such bizarre policy be explained?"[64]

Still, when all living things in the country were being choked, could one really expect that such vigorous and agile people would escape a similar lot? To that, the Soviet foreign policy agendas of 1960s added their weight: the USSR was designing an anti-Israel campaign. Thus, they came up with a convenient, ambiguous and indefinite term of "anti-Zionism," which became "a sword of Damocles hanging above the entire Jewish population of the country."[65] Campaigning against "Zionism" in the press became a sort of impenetrable shield as its obvious anti-Semitic nature became unprovable. Moreover, it sounded menacing and dangerous – "Zionism is the instrument of the American imperialism." So the "Jews had to prove their loyalty in one way or other, to somehow convince the people around them that they had no connection to their own Jewishness, especially to Zionism."[66]

The feelings of ordinary Jews in the Soviet Union became the feelings of the oppressed as vividly expressed by one of them: "Over the years of persecutions and vilifications, the Jews developed a certain psychological complex of suspicion to any contact coming from non-Jews. In everything they are ready to see implicit or explicit hints on their nationality …. The Jews can never publicly declare their Jewishness, and it is formally accepted that this should be kept silent, as if it was a vice, or a past crime."[67]

An incident in Malakhovka in October 1959 added substantially to that atmosphere. On the night of October 4, in Malakhovka, a settlement "half an hour from Moscow … with 30,000 inhabitants, about 10% of whom are Jews …, the roof of the synagogue caught fire along with … the house of the Jewish cemetery keeper … [and] the wife of the keeper died in the fire. On the same night, leaflets were scattered and posted across Malakhovka: `Away with the Jews in commerce! … We saved them from the Germans … yet they became arrogant so fast that the Russian people do not understand any longer… who's living on whose land.´"[68]

Growing depression drove some Jews to such an extreme state of mind as that described by D. Shturman: some "Jewish philistines developed a hatred toward Israel, believing it to be the generator of anti-Semitism in the Soviet politics. I remember the words of one succesful Jewish teacher: `One good bomb dropped on Israel would make our life much easier.´"[69]

Yet that was an ugly exception indeed. In general, the rampant anti-Zionist campaign triggered a "consolidation of the sense of Jewishness in people and the growth of sympathy towards Israel as the outpost of the Jewish nation."[70]

There is yet another explanation of the social situation in those years: yes, under Khrushchev, "fears for their lives had become the things of the past for the Soviet Jews," but "the foundations of new anti-Semitism had been laid," as the young generation of political establishment fought for caste privileges, "seeking to occupy the leading positions in arts,

science, commerce, finance, etc. There the new Soviet aristocracy encountered Jews, whose share in those fields was traditionally high." The "social structure of the Jewish population, which was mainly concentrated in the major centers of the country, reminded the ruling elite of their own class structure."[71]

Doubtless, such encounter did take place; it was an epic "crew change" in the Soviet ruling establishment, switching from the Jewish elite to the Russian one. It had clearly resulted in antagonism and I remember those conversations among the Jews during Khrushchev's era – they were full of not only ridicule, but also of bad insults with the ex-villagers, "muzhiks," who have infiltrated the establishment.

Yet altogether all the various social influences combined with the great prudence of the Soviet authorities led to dramatic alleviation of "prevalence and acuteness of modern Soviet anti-Semitism" by 1965, which became far inferior to what had been observed "during the war and the first post-war years," and it appears that "a marked attenuation, maybe even a complete dying out of `the percentage quote´ is happening."[72] Overall, in the 1960s the Jewish worldview was rather positive. This is what we consistently hear from different authors. (Contrast this to what we just read, that "the new anti-Semitism grew in strength in the 1960s.") The same opinion was expressed again twenty years later – "Khrushchev's era was one of the most peaceful periods of the Soviet history for the Jews."[73]

"In 1956-1957, many new Zionist societies sprang up in the USSR, bringing together young Jews who previously did not show much interest in Jewish national problems or Zionism. An important impetus for the awakening of national consciousness among Soviet Jews and for the development of a sense of solidarity with the State of Israel was the Suez Crisis [1956]." Later, "The International Youth Festival [Moscow, 1957] became a catalyst for the revival of the Zionist movement in the USSR among a certain portion of Soviet Jews … Between the festival and the Six-Day War [1967], Zionist activity in the Soviet Union was gradually expanding. Contacts of Soviet Jews with the Israeli Embassy became more frequent and less dangerous." Also, "the importance of Jewish Samizdat increased dramatically."[74]

During the so-called Khrushchev's "thaw" period (the end of 1950s to the beginning of the 1960s), Soviet Jews were spiritually re-energized; they shook off the fears and distress of the previous age of the "Doctors' Plot" and the persecution of "cosmopolitan." It "even became fashionable" in the metropolitan society "to be a Jew"; the Jewish motif entered Samizdat and poetic soirees then so popular among the young. Rimma Kazakova even ventured to declare her Jewish identity from the stage. Yevtushenko quickly caught the air and expressed it in 1961 in his *Babi Yar*[75], proclaiming himself a Jew in spirit. His poem (and the courage of *Literaturnaya Gazeta*) was a literary trumpet call for all of Soviet and world Jewry. Yevtushenko recited his poem during a huge number of poetic soirees, always accompanied by a roar of applause. After a while, Shostakovich, who often ventured into Jewish themes, set Yevtushenko's poem into his 13th Symphony. Yet its public performance was limited by the authorities. *Babi Yar* spread among Soviet and foreign Jewries as a reinvigorating and healing blast of air, a truly "revolutionary act … in the development of the social consciousness in the Soviet Union"; "it became the most significant event since the dismissal of the `Doctors' Plot.´"[76]

In 1964-65 Jewish themes returned into popular literature; take, for example, *Summer in Sosnyaki* by Anatoliy Rybakov or the diary of Masha Rolnik[77] ("written apparently under heavy influence of *Diary of Anne Frank*"[78]).

"After the ousting of Khrushchev from all his posts, the official policy towards Jews was softened somewhat. The struggle against Judaism abated and nearly all restrictions on baking matzah were abolished …. Gradually, the campaign against economic crimes faded away too …." Yet "the Soviet press unleashed a propaganda campaign against Zionist activities among the Soviet Jews and their connections to the Israeli Embassy."[79]

All these political fluctuations and changes in the Jewish policies in the Soviet Union did not pass unnoticed but served to awaken the Jews.

In the 1959 Census, only 21% Jews named Yiddish as their first language (in 1926 -72%).[80] Even in 1970s they used to say that "Russian Jewry, which was [in the past] the most Jewish Jewry in the world, became the least Jewish."[81] "The current state of Soviet society is fraught with destruction of Jewish spiritual and intellectual potential."[82] Or as another author put it: the Jews in the Soviet Union were neither "allowed to assimilate," nor were they "allowed to be Jews."[83]

Yet Jewish identity was never subdued during the entire Soviet period.

In 1966 the official mouthpiece *Sovetish Heymland* claimed that "even assimilated Russian-speaking Jews still retain their unique character, distinct from that of any other segment of population."[84] Not to mention the Jews of Odessa, Kiev, and Kharkov, who "sometimes were even snooty about their Jewishness – to the extent that they did not want to befriend a goy."[85]

Scientist Leo Tumerman (already in Israel in 1977) recalls the early Soviet period, when he used to "reject any nationalism." Yet now, looking back at those years: "I am surprised to notice what I had overlooked then: despite what appeared to be my full assimilation into the Russian life, the entire circle of my close and intimate friends at that time was Jewish."[86]

The sincerity of his statement is certain – the picture is clear. Such things were widespread and I witnessed similar situations quite a few times, and Russians people did not mind such behavior at all.

Another Jewish author notes: in the USSR "non-religious Jews of all walks of life hand in hand defended the principle of `racial purity.´" He adds: "Nothing could be more natural. People for whom the Jewishness is just an empty word are very rare, especially among the unassimilated [Jews]."[87]

Natan Sharansky's testimonial, given shortly after his immigration to Israel, is also typical: "Much of my Jewishness was instilled into me by my family. Although our family was an assimilated one, it nevertheless was Jewish." "My father, an ordinary Soviet journalist, was so fascinated with the revolutionary ideas of `happiness for all´ and not just for the Jews, that he became an absolutely loyal Soviet citizen." Yet in 1967 after the Six-Day War and later in 1968 after Czechoslovakia, "I suddenly realized an obvious difference between

myself and non-Jews around me … a kind of a sense of the fundamental difference between my Jewish consciousness and the national consciousness of the Russians."[88]

And here is another very thoughtful testimonial (1975): "The efforts spent over the last hundred years by Jewish intellectuals to reincarnate themselves into the Russian national form were truly titanic. Yet it did not give them balance of mind; on the contrary, it rather made them to feel the bitterness of their bi-national existence more acutely." And "they have an answer to the tragic question of Aleksandr Blok: `My Russia, my life, are we to drudge through life together?´ To that question, to which a Russian as a rule gives an unambiguous answer, a member of Russian-Jewish intelligentsia used to reply (sometimes after self-reflection): `No, not together. For the time being, yes, side by side, but not together´… A duty is no substitute for Motherland." And so "the Jews felt free from obligations at all sharp turns of Russian history."[89]

Fair enough. One can only hope for all Russian Jews to get such clarity and acknowledge this dilemma.

Yet usually the problem in its entirety is blamed on "anti-Semitism": "Excluding us from everything genuinely Russian, their anti-Semitism simultaneously barred us from all things Jewish …. Anti-Semitism is terrible not because of what it *does to the Jews* (by imposing restrictions on them), but because of what it *does with the Jews* by turning them into neurotic, depressed, stressed, and defective human beings."[90]

Still, those Jews, who had fully woken up to their identity, were very quickly, completely, and reliably cured from such a morbid condition.

Jewish identity in the Soviet Union grew stronger as they went through the historical ordeals predestined for Jewry by the 20th Century. First, it was the Jewish Catastrophe during the Second World War. (Through the efforts of official Soviet muffling and obscuring, Soviet Jewry only comprehended its full scope later.)

Another push was given by the campaign against "cosmopolitans" in 1949-1950.

Then there was a very serious threat of a massacre by Stalin, eliminated by his timely death.

And with Khrushchev's "thaw" and after it, later in the 1960s, Soviet Jewry quickly awoke spiritually, already sensing its unique identity.

During the second half of the 1950s, "the growing sense of bitterness, spread over large segments of Soviet Jewry", lead to "consolidation of the sense of national solidarity."[91]

But "only in the late 1960s did a very small but committed group of scientists (note, they were not humanitarians; the most colorful figure among them was Alexander Voronel) begin rebuilding of Jewish national consciousness in Russia."[92]

And then against the nascent national consciousness of Soviet Jews, the Six-Day War suddenly broke out and instantly ended in what might have seemed a miraculous victory.

Israel has ascended in their minds and Soviet Jews awoke to their spiritual and consanguineous kinship [with Israel].

But the Soviet authorities, furious at Nasser's disgraceful defeat, immediately attacked Soviet Jews with the thundering campaign against the "Judeo-Zionist-Fascism," insinuating that all the Jews were "Zionists" and claiming that the "global conspiracy" of Zionism "is the expected and *inevitable product of the entirety of Jewish history, Jewish religion, and the resultant Jewish national character*" and "because of the consistent pursuit of the ideology of racial supremacy and apartheid, Judaism turned out to be a very convenient religion for securing world dominance."[93]

The campaign on TV and in the press was accompanied by a dramatic break of diplomatic relations with Israel. The Soviet Jews had many reasons to fear: "It looked like it was going to come to calls for a pogrom."[94]

But underneath this scare a new and already unstoppable explosion of Jewish national consciousness was growing and developing.

"Bitterness, resentment, anger, and the sense of social insecurity were accruing for a final break up which would lead to complete severing of all ties with [this] country and [this] society – to emigration."[95]

"The victory of the Israeli Army contributed to the awakening of national consciousness among the many thousands of almost completely assimilated Soviet Jews …. The process of national revival has began …. The activity of Zionist groups in cities all across the country surged …. In 1969, there were attempts to create a united Zionist Organization [in the USSR] …. An increasing number of Jews applied to emigrate to Israel."[96]

And the numerous refusals to grant exit visas led to the failed attempt to hijack an airplane on June 15, 1970. The following "Dymshits-Kuznetsov hijacking affair" can be considered a historic landmark in the fate of Soviet Jewry.

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Chapter 24: Breaking away from Bolshevism

At the beginning of the 20th century, Europe imagined itself to be on the threshold of worldwide enlightenment. No one could have predicted the strength with which nationalism would explode in that very century among all nations of the world. One hundred years later it seems nationalist feelings are not about to die soon (the very message that international socialists have been trying to drum into our heads for the whole century), but instead are gaining strength.

Yet, does not the multi-national nature of humanity provide variety and wealth? Erosion of nations surely would be an impoverishment for humanity, the entropy of the spirit. (And centuries of the histories of national cultures would then turn into irredeemably dead and useless antics.) The logic that it would be easier to manage such a uniform mankind fails by its petty reductionism.

However, the propaganda in the Soviet empire harped non-stop in an importunately-triumphant manner about the imminent withering away and amalgamation of nations, proclaiming that no "national question" exists in our country, and that there is certainly no "Jewish question."

Yet why should not the Jewish question exist — the question of the unprecedented three-thousand-year-old existence of the nation, scattered all over the Earth, yet spiritulally soldered together despite all notions of the state and territoriality, and at the same time influencing the entire world history in the most lively and powerful way? Why should there not be a "Jewish question" given that all national questions come up at one time or other, even the "Gagauz question" [a small Christian Turkic people, who live in the Balkans and Eastern Europe]?

Of course, no such silly doubt could ever arise, if the Jewish question were not the focus of many different political games.

The same was true for Russia too. In pre-revolutionary Russian society, as we saw, it was the *omission* of the Jewish question that was considered "anti-Semitic." In fact, in the mind of the Russian public the Jewish question — understood as the question of civil rights or civil equality — developed into perhaps the central question of the whole Russian public life of that period, and certainly into the central node of the conscience of every individual, its acid test.

With the growth of European socialism, all national issues were increasingly recognized as merely regrettable obstacles to that great doctrine; all the more was the Jewish question (directly attributed to capitalism by Marx) considered a bloated hindrance. Mommsen wrote that in the circles of "Western-Russian socialist Jewry," as he put it, even the slightest attempt to discuss the Jewish question was branded as "reactionary" and "anti-Semitic" (this was even before the Bund).

Such was the iron standard of socialism inherited by the USSR. From 1918 the communists forbade (under threat of imprisonment or death) any separate treatment or consideration of

the Jewish question (except sympathy for their suffering under the Tsars and positive attitudes for their active role in communism). The intellectual class voluntarily and willingly adhered to the new canon while others were required to follow it.

This cast of thought persisted even through the Soviet-German war as if, even then, there was not any particular Jewish question. And even up to the demise of the USSR under Gorbachev, the authorities used to repeat hard-headedly: no, there is no Jewish question, no, no, no! (It was replaced by the "Zionist question.")

Yet already by the end of the World War II, when the extent of the destruction of the Jews under Hitler had dawned on the Soviet Jews, and then through Stalin's "anti-cosmopolitan" campaign of the late 1940s, the Soviet intelligentsia realized that the Jewish question in the USSR does exist! And the pre-revolutionary understanding — that it is central to Russian society and to the conscience of every individual and that it is the "true measure of humanity"[1] — was also restored.

In the West it was only the leaders of Zionism who confidently talked from the late 19th century about the historical uniqueness and everlasting relevance of the Jewish question (and some of them at the same time maintained robust links with diehard European socialism).
And then the emergence of the state of Israel and the consequent storms around it added to the confusion of naive socialist minds of Europeans.

Here I offer two small but at the time quite stirring and typical examples. In one episode of so-called "the dialogue between the East and the West" show (a clever Cold-War-period programme, where Western debaters were opposed by Eastern-European officials or novices who played off official nonsense for their own sincere convictions) in the beginning of 1967, a Slovak writer, Ladislav Mnacko, properly representing the socialist East, wittily noted that he never in his life had any conflict with the Communist authorities, except one case when his driver's license was suspended for a traffic violation. His French opponent angrily said that at least in one other case, surely Mnacko should be in the opposition: when the uprising in neighboring Hungary was drowned in blood. But no, the suppression of Hungarian Uprising neither violated the peace of Mnacko's mind, nor did it force him to say anything sharp or impudent. Then, a few months passed after the "dialogue" and the Six-Day War broke out. At that point the Czechoslovak Government of Novotny, all loyal Communists, accused Israel of aggression and severed diplomatic relations with it. And what happened next? Mnacko — a Slovak married to a Jew — who had calmly disregarded the suppression of Hungary before, now was so outraged and agitated that he left his homeland and as a protest went to live in Israel.

The second example comes from the same year. A famous French socialist, Daniel Meyer, at the moment of the Six-Day War had written in *Le Monde*, that henceforth he is: 1) ashamed to be a *socialist* — because of the fact that the Soviet Union calls itself a socialist country (well, when the Soviet Union was exterminating not only its own people but also other *socialists* — he was not ashamed); 2) ashamed of being a French (obviously due to the wrong political position of de Gaulle); and, 3) ashamed to be a *human* (wasn't that too much?), and ashamed of all except being a Jew.[2]

We are ready to accept both Mnacko's outrage and Meyer's anger, yet we would like to point out at the extreme intensity of their feelings — given the long history of their obsequious condoning of communism. Surely, the intensity of their feelings is also an aspect of the Jewish question in the 20th century.

So in what way "did the Jewish question not exist"?

If one listened to American radio broadcasts aimed at the Soviet Union from 1950 to the 1980s, one might conclude that there was no other issue in the Soviet Union as important as the Jewish question. (At the same time in the United States, where the Jews "can be described as … the most privileged minority" and where they "gained an unprecedented status, the majority of [American Jews] still claimed that hatred and discrimination by their Christian compatriots was a grim fact of the modern life"[3]; yet because it would sound incredible if stated aloud, then the Jewish question does not exist, and to notice it and talk about it is unnecessary and improper.)

We have to get used to talking about Jewish question not in a hush and fearfully, but clearly, articulately and firmly. We should do so not overflowing with passion, but sympathetically aware of both the unusual and difficult Jewish world history and centuries of our Russian history that are also full of significant suffering. Then the mutual prejudices, sometimes very intense, would disappear and calm reason would reign.

Working on this book, I can't help but notice that the Jewish question has been omnipresent in world history and it never was a national question in the narrow sense like all other national questions, but was always — maybe because of the nature of Judaism? — interwoven into something much bigger.

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When in the late 1960s I mused about the fate of the communist regime and felt that yes, it is doomed, my impression was strongly supported by the observation that so many Jews had already abandoned it.

There was a period when they persistently and in unison supported the Soviet regime, and at that time the future definitely belonged to it. Yet now the Jews started to defect from it, first the thinking individuals and later the Jewish masses. Was this not a sure sign that the years of the Soviet rule are numbered? Yes, it was.

So when exactly did it happen that the Jews, once such a reliable backbone of the regime, turned into almost its greatest adversary?

Can we say that the Jews always struggled for freedom? No, for too many of them were the most zealous communists. Yet now they turned their backs on it. And without them, the ageing Bolshevist fanaticism had not only lost some of its fervor, it actually ceased to be fanatical at all, rather it became lazy in the Russian way.

After the Soviet-German War, the Jews became disappointed by Communist power: it turned out that they were worse off than before. We saw the main stages of this split.

Initially, the support of the newborn state of Israel by the USSR had inspired the Soviet Jews. Then came the persecution of the "cosmopolitans" and the mainly Jewish intelligentsia (not the philistine masses yet) began to worry: communism pushes the Jews aside? oppresses them? The terrible threat of massacre by Stalin overwhelmed them as well — but it was short-lived and miraculously disappeared very soon. During the "interregnum," [following Stalin's death] and then under Khrushchev, Jewish hopes were replaced by dissatisfaction and the promised stable improvement failed to materialize.

And then the Six-Day War broke out with truly biblical force, rocking both Soviet and world Jewry, and the Jewish national consciousness began to grow like an avalanche. After the Six-Day War, "much was changed … the action acquired momentum. Letters and petitions began to flood Soviet and international organizations. National life was revived: during the holidays it became difficult to get into a synagogue, underground societies sprang up to study Jewish history, culture and Hebrew."[4]

And then there was that rising campaign against "Zionism," already linked to "imperialism," and so the resentment grew among the Jews toward that increasingly alien and abominable and dull Bolshevism — *where did such a monster come from*?

Indeed, for many educated Jews the departure from communism was painful as it is always difficult to part with an ideal — after all, was not it a "great, and perhaps inevitable, planetary experiment initiated in Russia in 1917; an experiment, based on ancient attractive and obviously high ideas, not all of which were faulty and many still retain their beneficial effect to this day…. Marxism requires educated minds."[5]

Many Jewish political writers strongly favored the term "Stalinism" — a convenient form to justify the earlier Soviet regime. It is difficult to part with the old familiar and sweet things, if it is really possible at all.

There have been attempts to increase the influence of intellectuals on the ruling elite. Such was the *Letter to the XXIII Congress* (of the Communist Party) by G. Pomerants (1966). The letter asked the Communist Party to trust the "scientific and creative intelligentsia," that "desires not anarchy but the rule of law … that wants not to destroy the existing system but to make it more flexible, more rational, more humane" and proposed to establish an advisory think tank, which would *generally* consult the executive leadership of the country.[6] The offer remained unanswered.

And many souls long ached for such a wasted opportunity with such a "glorious" past.

But there was no longer any choice . And so the Soviet Jews split away from communism. And now, while deserting it, they turned against it. And that was such a perfect opportunity — they could themselves, with expurgatory repentance, acknowledge their formerly active and cruel role in the triumph of communism in Russia.

Yet almost none of them did (I discuss the few exceptions below). The above-mentioned collection of essays, *Russia and the Jews*, so heartfelt, so much needed and so timely when published in 1924 was fiercely denounced by Jewry. And even today, according to the opinion of the erudite scholar, Shimon Markish: "these days, nobody dares to defend those

hook-nosed and burry commissars because of fear of being branded pro-Soviet, a Chekist, a God-knows-what else…. Yet let me say in no uncertain terms: the behavior of those Jewish youths who joined the Reds is a thousand times more understandable than the reasons of the authors of that collection of works."[7]

Still, some Jewish authors began to recognize certain things of the past as they really were, though in the most cautious terms: "It was the end of the role of the `Russian-Jewish intelligentsia´ that developed in the prewar and early postwar years and that was — to some degree sincerely — a bearer of Marxist ideology and that professed, however timidly and implicitly and contrary to actual practice, the ideals of liberalism, internationalism and humanism."[8] A bearer of Marxist ideology? — Yes, of course. The ideals of internationalism? — Sure. Yet liberalism and humanism? — True, but only after Stalin's death, while coming to senses.

However, very different things can be inferred from the writings of the majority of Jewish publicists in the late Soviet Union. Looking back to the very year of 1917, they find that under communism there was nothing but Jewish suffering! "Among the many nationalities of the Soviet Union, the Jews have *always* been stigmatized as the least `reliable´ element."[9]

What incredibly short memory one should have to state such things in 1983? *Always*! And what about the 1920s? And the 1930s? To assert that they were *then* considered the *least reliable*?! Is it really possible to forget everything so completely?

"If … one takes a bird's-eye view of the entire history of the Soviet era, then the latter appears as one gradual process of destruction of the Jews." Note — the *entire* history! We investigated this in the previous chapters and saw that even without taking into account Jewish over-representation in the top Soviet circles, there had been a period of well-being for many Jews with mass migration to cities, open access to higher education and the blossoming of Jewish culture. The author proceeds with a reservation: "Although there were … certain `fluctuations´, the overall trend continued … Soviet power, destroying all nationalities, generally dealt with the Jews in the most brutal way."[10]

Another author considers a disaster even the early period when Lenin and the Communist Party called upon the Jews to help with state governance, and the call was heard, and the great masses of Jews from the shtetls of the hated Pale moved into the capital and the big cities, closer to the avant-garde [of the Revolution]"; he states that the "… formation of the Bolshevik regime that had turned the greater part of Jews into `déclassé´, impoverished and exiled them and destroyed their families" was a catastrophe for the "majority of the Jewish population." (Well, that depends on one'spoint of view. And the author himself later notes: in the 1920s and 1930s, the "children of déclassé Jewish petty bourgeois were able to graduate from … the technical institutes and metropolitan universities and to become `commanders´ of the `great developments.´") Then his reasoning becomes vague: "in the beginning of the century the main feature of Jewish activity was … a fascination … with the idea of building a new fair society"– yet the army of revolution "consisted of plain rabble — all those `who were nothing,´ [a quote from *The Internationale*]." Then, "after the consolidation of the regime" that rabble "decided to implement their motto and to `become all´ [also a quote from *The Internationale*], and finished off their own leaders…. And so the kingdom of rabble — unlimited totalitarianism — was established." (And, in this context, the

Jews had nothing to do with it, except that they were among the victimized leaders.) And the purge continued "for four decades" until the "mid-1950s"; then the last "bitter pill … according to the scenario of disappointments" was prescribd to the remaining "`charmed´ Jews."[11] Again we see the same angle: the entire Soviet history was one of unending oppression and exclusion of the Jews.

Yet now they wail in protest in unison: "We did not elect this regime!"

Or even "it is not possible to cultivate a loyal Soviet elite among them [the Jews]."[12]
Oh my God, was not this method working flawlessly for 30 years, and only later coming undone? So where did all those glorious and famous names — whom we've seen in such numbers — came from?

And why were their eyes kept so tightly shut that they couldn't see the essence of Soviet rule for thirty to forty years? How is that that their eyes were opened only now? And what opened them?

Well, it was mostly because of the fact that now that power had suddenly turned around and began pushing the Jews not only out of its ruling and administrative circles, but out of cultural and scientific establishements also. "The disappointment was so fresh and sore, that we did not have the strength, nor the courage to tell even our children about it. And what about the children? … For the great majority of them the main motivation was the same — graduate school, career, and so on."[13]
Yet soon they would have to examine their situation more closely.

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In the 1970s we see examples of rather amazing agreement of opinions, unthinkable for the past half a century.

For instance, Shulgin wrote in 1929: "We must acknowledge our past. The flat denial … claiming that the Jews are to blame for nothing — neither for the Russian Revolution, nor for the consolidation of Bolshevism, nor for the horrors of the communism — is the worst way possible…. It would be a great step forward if this groundless tendency to blame all the troubles of Russia on the Jews could be somewhat differentiated. It would be already great if any `contrasts´ could be found."[14]

Fortunately, such contrasts, and even more — comprehension, and even remorse — were voiced by some Jews. And, combined with the honest mind and rich life experience, they were quite clear. And this brings hope.

Here's Dan Levin, an American intellectual who immigrated to Israel: "It is no accident, that none of the American writers who attempted to describe and explain what happened to Soviet Jewry, has touched this important issue — the [Jewish] responsibility for the communism…. In Russia, the people's anti-Semitism is largely due to the fact that the Russians perceive the Jews as the cause of all the evil of the revolution. Yet American writers — Jews and ex-Communists … do not want to resurrect the ghosts of the past. However, oblivion is a terrible thing."[15]

Simultaneously, another Jewish writer, an émigré from the Soviet Union, published: the experience of the Russian (Soviet) Jewry, in contrast to that of the European Jewry, whose historical background "is the experience of a collision with the forces of *outer* evil … requires a look not from inside out but rather of introspection and … inner self-examination." "In this reality we saw only one Jewish spirituality — that of the Commissar — and its name was Marxism." Or he writes about "our young Zionists who demonstrate so much contempt toward Russia, her rudeness and savagery, contrasting all this with [the worthiness of] the ancient Jewish nation." "I saw pretty clearly, that those who today sing hosanna to Jewry, glorifying it in its entiriety (without the slightest sense of guilt or the slightest potential to look inside), yesterday were saying: 'I wouldn't be against the Soviet regime, if it was not anti-Semitic,´ and two days ago they beat their breasts in ecstasy: `Long live the great brotherhood of nations! Eternal Glory to the Father and Friend, the genius Comrade Stalin!'"[16]

But today, when it is clear how many Jews were in the iron Bolshevik leadership, and how many more took part in the ideological guidance of a great country to the wrong track — should the question not arise [among modern Jews] as to some sense of responsibility for the actions of *those* [Jews]? It should be asked in general: shouldn't there be a kind of moral responsibility — not a joint liability, yet the responsibility *to remember and to acknowledge*? For example, modern Germans accept liability to Jews directly, both morally and materially, as perpetrators are liable to the victims: for many years they have paid compensation to Israel and personal compensation to surviving victims.

So what about Jews? When Mikhail Kheifets, whom I repeatedly cite in this work, after having been through labor camps, expressed the grandeur of his character by repenting on behalf of his people for the evil committed by the Jews in the Soviet Union in the name of communism — he was bitterly ridiculed.

The whole educated society, *the cultured circle*, had genuinely failed to notice any *Russian* grievances in the 1920s and 1930s; they didn't even assume that *such* could exist — yet they instantly recognized the Jewish grievances as soon as those emerged. Take, for example, Victor Perelman, who after emigrating published an anti-Soviet Jewish journal *Epoch and We* and who served the regime in the filthiest place, in Chakovsky's *Literaturnaya Gazeta* — until the Jewish question had entered his life. Then he opted out….

At a higher level, they generalized it as "the crash of … illusions about the integration [of Jewry] into the Russian social movements, about making any change in Russia."[17]

Thus, as soon as the Jews recognized their explicit antagonism to the Soviet regime, they turned into its intellectual opposition — in accord to their social role. Of course, it was not them who rioted in Novocherkassk, or created unrest in Krasnodar, Alexandrov, Murom, or Kostroma. Yet the filmmaker Mikhail Romm plucked up his heart and, during a public speech, unambiguously denounced the "anti-cosmopolitan" campaign — and that became one of the first Samizdat documents (and Romm himself, who in so timely a manner rid himself of his ideological impediments, became a kind of spiritual leader for the Soviet Jewry, despite his films *Lenin in October* (1937), *Lenin in 1918* (1939), and despite being a fivefold winner of the Stalin Prize). And after that the Jews had become reliable supporters and intrepid members of the "democratic" and "dissident" movements.

Looking back from Israel at the din of Moscow, another witness reflected: "A large part of Russian democrats (if not the majority) are of Jewish origin…. Yet they do not identify [themselves] as Jews and do not realize that their audience is also mostly Jewish.""[18]

And so the Jews had once again become the Russian revolutionaries, shouldering the social duty of the Russian intelligentsia, which the Jewish Bolsheviks so zealously helped to exterminate during the first decade after the revolution; they had become the true and genuine nucleus of the new public opposition. And so yet again no progressive movement was possible without Jews.

Who had halted the torrent of false political (and often semi-closed) court trials? Alexander Ginzburg, and then Pavel Litvinov and Larisa Bogoraz did. I would not exaggerate if I claim that their appeal "To world public opinion" in January 1968, delivered not through unreliable Samizdat, but handed fearlessly to the West in front of Cheka cameras, had been a milestone of Soviet ideological history. Who were those seven brave souls who dragged their leaden feet to Lobnoye Mesto [a stone platform in Red Square] on Aug. 25, 1968? They did it not for the greater success of their protest, but to wash the name of Russia from the Czechoslovak disgrace by their sacrifice. Four out of the seven were Jews. (Remember, that the percentage of Jews in the population of the country then was less than 1%) We should also remember Semyon Gluzman, who sacrificed his freedom in the struggle against the "nuthouses" [dissidents were sometimes incarcerated in psychiatric clinics]. Many Jewish intellectuals from Moscow were among the first punished by the Soviet regime.

Yet very few dissidents ever regretted the past of their Jewish fathers. P. Litvinov never mentioned his grandfather's role in Soviet propaganda. Neither would we hear from V. Belotserkovsky how many innocents were slaughtered by his Mauser-toting father. Communist Raisa Lert, who became a dissident late in life, was proud of her membership in *that* party even after *The Gulag Archipelago*; the party "she had joined in good faith and enthusiastically" in her youth; the party to which she had "wholly devoted herself" and from which she herself had suffered, yet nowadays it is "not the same" party anymore.[19] Apparenty she did not realize how appealing the early Soviet terror was for her.

After the events of 1968, Sakharov joined the dissident movement without a backward glance. Among his new dissident preoccupations were many individual cases; in particular, personal cases of Jewish refuseniks [those, overwhelming Jewish, dissidents who requested, but were refused the right to emigrate from the Soviet Union]. Yet when he tried to expand the business (as he had innocently confided to me, not realizing all the glaring significance of what he said), Gelfand, a member of the Academy of Science, told him that "we are tired of helping these people to resolve their problems," while another member, Zeldovich, said: "I'm not going to sign any petition on behalf of victims of any injustice — I want to retain the ability to protect those who suffer for their nationality." Which means — to protect the Jews only.

There was also a purely Jewish dissident movement, which was concerned only with the oppression of the Jews and Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union (more about it — later).

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A trasformation in public consciousness often pushes forward outstanding individuals as representatives, symbols and spokesmen of the age. So in the 1960s Alexander Galich became such a typical and accurate representative of the processes and attitudes in the Soviet intellectual circles. ("`Galich´ is a pen name, explains N. Rubinstein. It is made of syllables of his real name — *G*insburg *Al*exander Arkadiev*ich*. Choosing a pen name is a serious thing."[20] Actually, I assume that the author was aware that, apart from being "just a combination of syllables," "Galich" is also the name of the ancient Russian city from the very heart of Slavic history.) Galich enjoyed the general support of Soviet intelligentsia; tape recordings of his guitar performances were widely disseminated; and they have almost become the symbol of the social revival of the 1960s expressing it powerfully and vehemently. The opinion of the *cultural circle* was unanimous: "the most popular people's poet," the "bard of modern Russia."

Galich was 22 when the Soviet-German War broke out. He says that he was exempt from military service because of poor health; he then moved to Grozny, where he "unexpectedly easily became the head of the literature section of the local Drama Theatre"; he also "organized a theater of political satire"; then he evacuated through Krasnovodsk to Chirchik near Tashkent; in 1942, he moved from there to Moscow with a front-line theatrical company under formation and spent the rest of the war with that company.

He recalled how he worked on hospital trains, composing and performing couplets for wounded soldiers; how they were drinking spirits with a trainmaster…. "All of us, each in his own way, worked for the great common cause: we were defending our Motherland."[21] After the war he became a well-known Soviet scriptwriter (he worked on many movies) and a playwright (ten of his plays were staged by "many theaters in the Soviet Union and abroad" [216] [references in square brackets refer to the page number in the source 21]. All that was in 1940s and 1950s, in the age of general spiritual stagnation — well, he could not step out of the line, could he? He even made a movie about Chekists, and was awarded for his work.

Yet in the early 1960s, Galich abruptly changed his life. He found courage to forsake his successful and well-off life and "walk into the square." [98] It was after that that he began performing guitar-accompanied songs to people gathering in private Moscow apartments. He gave up open publishing, though it was, of course, not easy: "[it was great] to read a name on the cover, not just someone else's, but mine!" [216]

Surely, his anti-regime songs, keen, acidic, and and morally demanding, were of benefit to the society, further destabilizing public attitudes.

In his songs he mainly addressed Stalin's later years and beyond; he usually did not deplore the radiant past of the age of Lenin (except one instance: "The carts with bloody cargo / squeak by Nikitsky Gate" [224]). At his best, he calls the society to moral cleansing, to resistance ("Gold-digger's waltz" [26], "I choose liberty" [226], "Ballad of the clean hands" [181], "Our fingers blotted from the questionnaires" [90], "Every day silent trumpets glorify thoughtful vacuity" [92]). Sometimes he sang the hard truth about the past ("In vain had our infantry perished in 1943, to no avail" [21]), sometimes — "Red myths," singing about poor persecuted communists ("There was a time — almost a third of the inmates came from the Central Committee, / There was a time when for the red color / they added ten years [to the sentence]!"[69]). Once he touched dekulakization ("Disenfranchised ones were summoned

in first" [115]). Yet his main blow was against the current establishment ("There are fences in the country; behind fences live the leaders" [13]). He was justly harsh there; however, he oversimplified the charge by attacking their privileged way of life only: here they eat, drink, rejoice [151-152]. The songs were embittering, but in a narrow-minded way, almost like the primitive "Red proletarian" propaganda of the past. Yet when he was switching his focus from the leaders to "the people", his characters were almost entirely boobies, fastidious men, rabble and rascals — a very limited selection.

He had found a precise point of perspective for himself, perfectly in accord with the spirit of the time: he impersonalized himself with all those people who were suffering, persecuted and killed ("I was a GI and as a GI I'll die" [248], "We, GIs, are dying in battle"). Yet with his many songs narrated from the first person of a former camp inmate, he made a strong impression that he was an inmate himself ("And that other inmate was me myself" [87]; "I froze like a horseshoe in a sleigh trail / Into ice that I picked with a hammer pick / After all, wasn't it me who spent twenty years / In those camps" [24]; "as the numbers [personal inmate number tattooed on the arm] / we died, we died"; "from the camp we were sent right to the front!"[69]). Many believed that he was a former camp inmate and "they have tried to find from Galich when and where he had been in camps."[22]

So how did he address his past, his longstanding participation in the stupefying official Soviet lies? That's what had struck me the most: singing with such accusatory pathos, he had never expressed *a single word of his personal remorse, not a word of personal repentance, nowhere*! Didn't he realize that when he sang: "Oh Party's Iliad! What a giftwrapped groveling!" [216], he sang about himself? And when he crooned: "If you sell the unction" [40], as though referring to somebody else, did it occur to him that he himself was "selling unction" for half of his life. Why on earth would he not renounce his pro-official plays and films? No! "We did not sing glory to executioners!" [119] Yet, as the matter of fact, they did. Perhaps he did realize it or he gradually came to the realization, because later, no longer in Russia, he said: "I was a well-off screenwriter and playwright and a well-off Soviet flunky. And I have realized that I could no longer go on like that. Finally, I have to speak loudly, speak the truth …" [639].

But then, in the sixties, he intrepidly turned the pathos of the civil rage, for instance, to the refutation of the Gospel commandments ("do not judge, lest ye be judged"): "No, I have contempt for the very essence / Of this formula of existence!" And then, relying on the sung miseries, he confidently tried on a prosecutor's robe: "I was not elected. But I am the judge!" [100] And so he grew so confident, that in the lengthy *Poem about Stalin* (*The Legend of Christmas*), where he in bad taste imagined Stalin as Christ, and presented the key formula of his agnostic mindset — his really famous, the clichéd -quotes, and so harmful lines: "Don't be afraid of fire and hell, / And fear only him / Who says: `I know the right way!´" [325].

But Christ did teach us *the right way*…. What we see here in Galich's words is just boundless intellectual anarchism that muzzles any clear idea, any resolute offer. Well, we can always run as a thoughtless (but *pluralistic*) herd, and probably we'll get somewhere.

Yet the most heartrending and ubiquitous keynote in his lyrics was the sense of Jewish identity and Jewish pain ("Our train leaves for Auschwitz today and daily"). Other good examples include the poems *By the rivers of Babylon* and *Kadish*. (Or take this: "My six-

pointed star, burn it on my sleeve and on my chest." Similar lyrical and passionate tones can be found in the *The memory of Odessa* ("I wanted to unite Mandelstam and Chagall). "Your kinsman and your cast-off / Your last singer of the Exodus" — as he addressed the departing Jews.)

The Jewish memory imbued him so deeply that even in his non-Jewish lyrics he casually added expressions such as: "Not a hook-nosed"; "not a Tatar, not a Yid" [115, 117]"; "you are still not in Israel, dodderer?" [294]; and even Arina Rodionovna [Pushkin's nanny, immortalized by the poet in his works] lulls him in Yiddish [101]. Yet he doesn't mention a single prosperous or non-oppressed Jew, a well-off Jew on a good position, for instance, in a research institute, editorial board, or in commerce — such characters didn't even make a passing appearance in his poems. A Jew is always either humiliated, or suffering, or imprisoned and dying in a camp. Take his famous lines: "You are not to be chamberlains, the Jews … / Neither the Synod, nor the Senate is for you / You belong in Solovki and Butyrki" [the latter two being political prisons] [40].

What a short memory they have — not only Galich, but his whole audience who were sincerely, heartily taking in these sentimental lines! What about those twenty years, when Soviet Jewry was not nearly in the Solovki, when so many of them did parade as chamberlains and in the Senate!?

They have forgotten it. They have sincerely and completely forgotten it. Indeed, it is so difficult to remember bad things about yourself.

And inasmuch as among the successful people milking the regime there were supposedly no Jews left, but only Russians, Galich's satire, unconsciously or consciously, hit the Russians, all those Klim Petroviches and Paramonovs; all that social anger invoked by his songs targeted them, through the stressed "russopyaty" [derogatory term for Russians] images and details, presenting them as informers, prison guards, profligates, fools or drunks. Sometimes it was more like a caricature, sometimes more of a contemptuous pity (which we often indeed deserve, unfortunately): "Greasy long hair hanging down, / The guest started "Yermak" [a song about the cossack leader and Russian folk hero] … he cackles like a cock / Enough to make a preacher swear / And he wants to chat / About the salvation of Russia" [117-118]. Thus he pictured the Russians as always drunk, not distinguishing kerosene from vodka, not interested in anything except drinking, idle, or simply lost, or foolish individuals.Yet he was considered a *folk* poet…. And he didn't image a single Russian hero-soldier, workman, or intellectual, not even a single decent camp inmate (he assigned the role of the main camp inmate to himself), because, you know, all those "prison-guard seed" [118] camp bosses are Russians. And here he wrote about Russia directly: "Every liar is a Messiah! / <…> And just dare you to ask — / Brothers, had there even been / Any Rus in Russia?" — "It is abrim with filth." — And then, desperately: "But somewhere, perhaps, / She does exist!?" That invisible Russia, where "under the tender skies / Everyone shares / God's word and bread." "I pray thee: / Hold on! / Be alive in decay, / So in the heart, as in Kitezh, / I could hear your bells!" [280-281]

So, with the new opportunity and the lure of emigration, Galich was torn between the submerged legendary Kitezh [legendary Russian invisble city] and today's filth: "It's the same vicious circle, the same old story, the ring, which cannot be either closed, or open!" [599].

He left with the words: “I, a Russian poet, cannot be separated from Russia by `the fifth article´ [the requirement in the Soviet internal passport - "nationality"]!” [588]

Yet some other departing Jews drew from his songs a seed of aversion and contempt for Russia, or at least, the confidence that it is right to break away from her. Heed a voice from Israel: “We said goodbye to Russia. Not without pain, but forever…. Russia still holds us tenaciously. But … in a year, ten years, a hundred years — we’ll escape from her and find our own home. Listening to Galich, we once again recognize that it is the right way.”[23]

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Chapter 25: Accusing Russia

The Jewish break from the Soviet communism was doubtless a movement of historical significance.

In the 1920s and 1930s, the fusion of the Soviet Jewry and Bolshevism seemed permanent. Then suddenly, they diverge? What a joy!

Of course, as is always true for both individuals and nations, it is unreasonable to expect words of remorse from Jews regarding their past involvement. But I absolutely could not expect that the Jews, while deserting Bolshevism, rather than expressing even a sign of repentance or at least some embarrassment, instead angrily turned on the Russian people: it is the Russians who had ruined democracy in Russia (i.e., in February 1917), it is the Russians who are guilty of support of this regime from 1918 on.

Sure, they claim, it is we (the Russian people) who are the guilty! Actually, it was earlier than 1918 – the dirty scenes of the radiant February Revolution were tale-telling. Yet the neophyte anti-communists were uncompromising – from now on everyone must accept that they have always fought against this regime, and no one should recall that it used to be their favorite and should not mention how well they had once served this tyranny. Because it was the "natives" who created, nurtured and cared for it:

"The leaders of the October Coup … were the followers rather than the leaders. [Really? The New Iron Party was made up of the "followers"?] They simply voiced the dormant wishes of the masses and worked to implement them. They did not break with the grassroots." "The October coup was a disaster for Russia. The country could evolve differently…. Then [in the stormy anarchy of the February Revolution] Russia saw the signs of law, freedom and respect for human dignity by the state, but they all were swept away by the people's wrath."[1]

Here is a more recent dazzling treatment of Jewish participation in Bolshevism: "The Bolshevism of Lenin and Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party of Bolsheviks was just an intellectual and civilized form of 'plebian' Bolshevism. Should the former fail, the latter, much more dreadful, would prevail." Therefore, "by widely participating in the Bolshevik Revolution, providing it with cadres of intellectuals and organizers, the Jews saved Russia from total mob rule. They came out with the most humane of possible forms of Bolshevism."[2] Alas, "just as the rebellious people had used the Party of Lenin to overthrow the democracy of intellectuals [when did that exist?], the pacified people used Stalin's bureaucracy to get rid of … everything still harboring free intellectual spirit."[3] Sure, sure: "the guilt of the intelligentsia for the subsequent dismal events of Russian history is greatly exaggerated." And in the first place, "the intelligentsia is liable to itself,"[4] and by no means to the people. On the contrary, "it would be nice if the people realized their guilt before the intelligentsia."[5]

Indeed, “the totalitarian rule … in its essence and origin is that of the people.”[6] “This is a totalitarian country … because such was the choice of Russian people.”[7]

It is all because the “Tatar’s wild spirit captured the soul of Orthodox Russia,”[8] that is, the “Asian social and spiritual structure, inherited by the Russians from the Mongols … is stagnant and incapable of development and progress.”[9] (Well, Lev Gumilev also developed a theory that instead of the Tatar yoke, there was a friendly alliance of Russians and Tatars. However, Russian folklore, in its many proverbs referring to Tatars as to enemies and oppressors, provided an unambiguous answer to that question. Folklore does not lie; it is not pliant like a scientific theory.) Therefore, “the October coup was an unprecedented breakthrough of the Asian essence [of Russians].”[10]

For those who want to tear and trample Russian history, Chaadayev is the favorite theoretician (although he is undoubtedly an outstanding thinker). First Samizdat and later émigré publications carefully selected and passionately quoted his published and unpublished texts which suited their purposes. As to the unsuitable quotations and to the fact that the main opponents of Chaadayev among his contemporaries were not Nicholas I and Benckendorff, but his friends – Pushkin, Vyazemsky, Karamzin, and Yazikov – these facts were ignored.

In the early 1970s, the hate against all things Russian was gathering steam. Derogatory expressions about Russian culture entered Samizdat and contemporary slang. “Human pigsty” – so much contempt for Russia as being spoiled material was expressed in the anonymous Samizdat article signed by “S. Telegin” (G. Kopylov)! Regarding the forest fires of 1972, the same “Telegin” cursed Russia in a Samizdat leaflet: “So, the Russian forests burn? It serves Russia right for all her evil-doing!! “The entire people consolidate into the reactionary mass” (G. Pomerants). Take another sincere confession: “The sound of an accordion [the popular Russian national instrument] drives me berserk; the very contact with these masses irritates me.”[11] Indeed, love cannot be forced. “‘Jews,’‘Jewish destiny’ is just the rehash of the destiny of intelligentsia in this country, the destiny of her culture; the Jewish orphanage symbolizes loneliness because of the collapse of the traditional faith in ‘the people.’”[12](What a transformation happened between the 19th and mid-20th century with the eternal Russian problem of “the people”! By now they view “the people” as an indigenous mass, apathetically satisfied with its existence and its leaders. And by the inscrutable providence of Fate, the Jews were forced to live and suffer in the cities of their country. To love these masses is impossible; to care about them – unnatural.) The same Khazanov (by then still in the USSR) reasoned: The Russia which I love is a Platonic idea that does not exist in reality. The Russia which I see around is abhorrent”; “she is a unique kind of Augean stables”; “her mangy inhabitants”; “there’ll be a day of shattering reckoning for all she is today.”[13]

Indeed, there will be a day of reckoning, though not for the state of adversity that had fallen on Russia much earlier.

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In the 1960s, many among intelligentsia began to think and talk about the situation in the USSR, about its future and about Russia itself. Due to strict government censorship these arguments and ideas were mentioned only in private or in mostly pseudonymous Samizdat articles. But when Jewish emigration began, the criticisms of Russia openly and venomously spilled across the free Western world, as it formed one of the favorite topics among the émigrés and was voiced so loudly that often nothing else could be heard.

In 1968, Arkady Belinkov fled abroad. He was supposedly a fierce enemy of the Soviet regime and not at all of the Russian people. Wasn't he? Well, consider his article The Land of Slaves, the Land of Masters in The New Bell, a collection he edited himself. And at what did he direct his wrath? (It is worth considering that the article was written back in the USSR and the author did not have enough courage to accuse the regime itself.) Belinkov does not use the word "Soviet" even once, instead preferring a familiar theme: eternally enslaved Russia, freedom "for our homeland is worse than gobbling broken glass" and in Russia "they sometimes hang the wrong people, sometimes the wrong way, and never enough." Even in the 1820s "it was much evident that in the process of evolution, the population of [Russia] …would turn into a herd of traitors, informers, and torturers"; "it was the "Russian fear" – to prepare warm clothes and to wait for a knock at the door" – note that even here it was not the "Soviet fear." (Yet who before the Bolshevik revolution had ever waited for a knock on the door in the middle of the night?) "The court in Russia does not judge, it already knows everything. Therefore, in Russia, it only condemns."[14] (Was it like that even during the Alexandrine reforms?…. And what about juries and magistrates? Hardly a responsible, balanced judgment!)

Indeed, so overwhelming is the author's hate and so bitter his bile that he vilifies such great Russian writers as Karamzin, Zhukovsky, Tyutchev and even Pushkin, not to mention Russian society in general for its insufficient revolutionary spirit: "a pathetic society of slaves, descendants of slaves and ancestors of slaves," "the cattle trembling from fear and anger," "rectum-pipers, shuddering at the thought of possible consequences," "the Russian intelligentsia always been willing to help stifle freedom."[15]

Well, if, for Belinkov, it was all "masked anti-Soviet sentiments," a sly wink, then why did he not rewrite it abroad? If Belinkov actually thought differently, then why print it in this form?

No, that is the way he thought and what he hated.

So was this how dissident Jews repudiated Bolshevism?

Around the same time, at the end of the 1960s, a Jewish collection about the USSR was published in London. It included a letter from the USSR: "In the depths of the inner labyrinths of the Russian soul, there is always a pogromist…. A slave and a thug dwell there too."[16] Belotserkovsky happily repeats someone else's joke: "the Russians are a strong

nation, except for their heads."[17] "Let all these Russians, Ukrainians … growl drunkenly with their wives, gobble vodka and get happily misled by communist lies … without us … They were crawling on all fours worshipping wood and stone when we gave them the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."[18]

"Oh, if only you would have held your peace! This would have been regarded as your wisdom." (Job 13:5).

(Let us note that any insulting judgment about the "Russian soul" in general or about the "Russian character" generally does not give rise to the slightest protest or doubt among civilized people. The question "of daring to judge nations as one uniform and faceless whole" does not arise. If someone does not like all things Russian or feels contempt for them, or even expresses in progressive circles the belief that "Russia is a cesspool," this is no sin in Russia and it does not appear reactionary or backward. And no one immediately appeals to presidents, prime ministers, senators, or members of Congress with a reverent cry, "What do you think of such incitement of ethnic hatred?" We've said worse of ourselves since the 19th century and right up to the revolution. We have a rich tradition of this.)

Then we learn of "semi-literate preachers of their religion," and that "Russian Orthodoxy hasn't earned the credence of intellectuals" (from "Telegin"). The Russians "so easily abandoned the faith of their forefathers, indifferently watched how their temples were destroyed in front of their eyes." Oh, here is a guess: "Perhaps, the Russian people only temporarily submitted to the power of Christianity?" That is for 950 years! "And they only waited for the moment to get rid of it,"[19] that is, for the revolution? How much ill will must accumulate in someone's heart to utter something like that! (Even Russian publicists often slipped into this trap of distorted consciousness. The eminent early emigrant journalist S. Rafalsky, perhaps even a priest's son, wrote that "Orthodox Holy Russia allowed its holy sites to be easily crushed."[20] Of course, the groans of those mowed down by Chekists' machine guns during Church riots in 1918 were not heard in Paris. There have been no uprisings since. I would like to have seen this priest's son try to save the sacred sites in the 1920s himself.)

Sometimes it is stated bluntly: "Russian Orthodoxy is a Hottentot religion" (Grobman). Or, "idiocy perfumed by Rublev, Dionysius and Berdyaev"; the idea of the "restoration" of traditional Russian historical orthodoxy "scares many…. This is the darkest future possible for the country and for Christianity."[21] Or, as novelist F. Gorenshtein said: "Jesus Christ was the Honorary Chairman of the Union of the Russian People [pre-revolutionary Russian Nationalist organization], whom they perceived as a kind of universal ataman [Cossack chieftain]."[22]

Don't make it too sharp – you might chip the blade!

However, one must distinguish from such open rudeness that velvet soft Samizdat philosopher-essayist Grigory Pomerants who worked in those years. Presumably, he rose

above all controversies – he wrote about the fates of nations in general, about the fate of the intelligentsia generally; he suggested that nowadays no such thing as people exists, save, perhaps, Bushmen. I read him in 1960s Samizdat saying: "The people are becoming more and more vapid broth and only we, the intelligentsia, remain the salt of the earth." "Solidarity of the intelligentsia across the borders is a more real thing than the solidarity of the intelligentsia and its people."

It sounded very modern and wise. And yet, in Czechoslovakia in 1968 it was precisely the unity of the intelligentsia with the "vapid broth" of its non-existent people that created a spiritual stronghold long unheard of in Europe. The presence of two-thirds of a million Soviet troops couldn't break their spirit; it was their communist leaders who eventually gave in. (And 12 years later, the same thing happened in Poland.)

In his typically ambiguous manner of constructing endless parallel arguments that never merge into a clear logical construct, Pomerants never explicitly addressed the national question. He extensively dwelt on the Diaspora question, in the most abstract and general manner, not specifying any nation, hovering aloft in relativism and agnosticism. He glorified the Diaspora: "Everywhere, we are not exactly strangers. Everywhere, we are not exactly natives."… "An appeal to one faith, tradition and nation flies in the face of another." He complained: "According to the rules established for the Warsaw students, one can love only one nation" but "what if I am related by blood to this country, but love others as well?"[23]

This is a sophisticated bait-and-switch. Of course, you can love not only one, but ten or more countries and nations. However, you can belong to and be a son of only one motherland, just as you can only have one mother.

To make the subject clearer, I want to describe the letter exchange I had with the Pomerants couple in 1967. By that year, my banned novel The First Circle circulated among the Samizdat – and among the first who had sent me their objections were G. S. Pomerants and his wife, Z. A. Mirkin. They said that I hurt them by my inept and faulty handling of the Jewish question, and that I had irreparably damaged the image of Jews in the novel – and thus my own image. How did I damage it? I thought I had managed to avoid showing those cruel Jews who reached the heights of power during the early Soviet years. But Pomerants' letters abounded with undertones and nuances, and they accused me of insensitivity to Jewish pain.

I replied to them, and they replied to me. In these letters we also discussed the right to judge entire nations, even though I had done no such thing in my novel.

Pomerants suggested to me then – and to every writer in general as well as to anyone who offers any personal, psychological or social judgment – to behave and to reason as if no nation has ever existed in the world – not only to abstain from judging them as a whole but to ignore every man's nationality. "What is natural and excusable for Ivan Denisovich (to see

Cesar Markovich as a non-Russian) – is a disgrace for an intellectual, and for a Christian (not a baptized person but a Christian) is a great sin: 'There is no Hellene and no Jew for me.'"

What an elevated point of view. May God help us all reach it one day. After all, without it, would not the meaning of united humanity, and so Christinaity, have been useless?

Yet we have already been aggressively convinced once that there are no nations, and were instructed to quickly destroy our own, and we madly did it back then.

In addition, regardless of the argument, how can we portray specific people without referring to their nationality? And if there are no nations, are there no languages? But no writer can write in any language other than his native one. If nations would wither away, languages would die also.

One cannot eat from an empty bowl.

I noticed that it was more often Jews than any others who insisted that we pay no attention to nationality! What does "nationality" have to do with anything? What "national characteristics," what "national character" are you talking about?

And I was ready to shake hands on that: "I agree! Let's ignore it from now on…."

But we live in our unfortunate century, when perhaps the first feature people notice in others for some reason is exactly their nationality. And, I swear, Jews are the ones who distinguish and closely monitor it most jealously and carefully. Their own nation….

Then, what should we do with the fact – you have read about it above – that Jews so often judge Russians precisely in generalized terms, and almost always to condemn? The same Pomerants writes about "the pathological features of the Russian character," including their "internal instability." (And he is not concerned that he judges the entire nation. Imagine if someone spoke of "pathological features of the Jewish character"… What would happen then?) The Russian "masses allowed all the horrors of Oprichnina to happen just as they later allowed Stalin's death camps."[24] (See, the Soviet internationalist bureaucratic elite would have stopped them – if not for this dull mass….) More sharply still, "Russian Nationalism will inevitably end in an aggressive pogrom,"[25] meaning that every Russian who loves his nation already has the potential for being pogromist.

We can but repeat the words of that Chekhov's character: "Too early!"

Most remarkable was how Pomerants's second letter to me ended. Despite his previously having so insistently demanded that it is not proper to distinguish between nations, in that large and emotionally charged letter, (written in a very angry, heavy hand), he delivered an ultimatum on how I could still save my disgusting The First Circle. The offered remedy was this: to turn Gerasimovich [the hero] into a Jew! So a Jew would commit the novel's greatest act of spiritual heroism! "It is absolutely not important that Gerasimovich had been drawn

from a Russian prototype," says our indifferent-to-nations author (italics added). In truth, he did give me an alternative: if I still insisted on leaving Gerasimovich Russian, then I must add an equally powerful image of a noble, self-sacrificing Jew to my story. And if I would not follow any of his advice, Pomerants threatened to open a public campaign against me. (I ignored it at this point.)

Notably, he conducted this one-sided battle, calling it "our polemic," first in foreign journals and, when it became possible, in the Soviet magazines, often repeating and reprinting the same articles, although taking care each time to exorcise the blemishes his critics had picked up the last time. In the course of this he uttered another pearl of wisdom: there was only one Absolute Evil in the world and it was Hitlerism – in this regard, our philosopher was not a relativist, not at all. But as to communism, this former prisoner of the camps and by no means a Communist himself, suddenly proclaims that communism – is not an unquestionable evil (and even "some spirit of democracy surrounded the early Cheka"), and he does so harder and harder over the years (reacting to my intransigence towards communism).[26] On the other hand, hard core anti-communism is undoubtedly evil, especially if it builds upon the Russian Nationalism (which, as he had reminded us earlier, cannot be separated from pogroms).

That is where Pomerants's smooth high-minded and "non-national" principles led.

Given such a skewed bias, can mutual understanding between Russians and Jews be achieved?

"You mark the speck in your brother's eye, but ignore the plank in your own."

In those same months when I corresponded with Pomerants, some liberal hand in the Leningrad Regional Party Committee copied a secret memorandum signed by Shcherbakov, Smirnov, and Utekhin on the matter of alleged "destructive Zionist activity in the city" with "subtle forms of ideological subversion." My Jewish friends asked me "How should we deal with this?" "It is clear, how," – I replied before even reading the paper – "Openness! Publish it in Samizdat! Our strength is transparency and publicity!" But my friends hesitated: "We cannot do it just like that because it would be misunderstood."

After reading the documents, I understood their anxiety. From the reports, it was clear that the youth's literary evening at the Writers' House on January 30, 1968 had been politically honest and brave – the government with its politics and ideology had been both openly and covertly ridiculed. On the other hand, the speeches had clear national emphases (perhaps, the youth there were mostly Jewish); they contained explicit resentment and hostility, and even, perhaps, contempt for Russians, and longing for Jewish spirituality. It was because of this that my friends were wary of publishing the document in Samizdat.

I was suddenly struck by how true these Jewish sentiments were. "Russia is reflected in the window glass of a beer stand," – the poet Ufland had supposedly said there. How

horrifyingly true! It seemed that the speakers accused the Russians, not directly, but by allusions, of crawling under counters of beer pubs and of being dragged from the mud by their wives; that they drink vodka until unconscious, they squabble and steal….

We must see ourselves objectively, see our fatal shortcomings. Suddenly, I grasped the Jewish point of view; I looked around and I was horrified as well: Dear God, where we, the Jews? Cards, dominoes, gaping at TV…. What cattle, what animals surround us! They have neither God nor spiritual interests. And so much feeling of hurt from past oppression rises in your soul.

Only it is forgotten, that the real Russians were killed, slaughtered and suppressed, and the rest were stupefied, embittered, and driven to the extremes by Bolshevik thugs and not without the zealous participation of the fathers of today's young Jewish intellectuals. Modern day Jews are irritated by those mugs who have become the Soviet leadership since the 1940s – but they irritate us as well. However, the best among us were killed, not spared.

"Do not look back!" – Pomerants lectured us later in his Samizdat essays; do not look back like Orpheus who lost Eurydice this way.

Yet we have already lost more than Eurydice.

We were taught since the 1920s to throw away the past and jump on board modernity.

But the old Russian proverb advises – go ahead but always look back.

We must look back. Otherwise, we would never understand anything.

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Even if we had tried not to look back, we would always be reminded that the "core [Russian issue] is in fact the inferiority complex of the spiritless leaders of the people that has persisted throughout its long history," and this very complex "pushed the Russian Tsarist government towards military conquests…. An inferiority complex is disease of mediocrity."[27] Do you want to know why the Revolution of 1917 happened in Russia? Can you guess? Yes, "the same inferiority complex caused a revolution in Russia."[28] (Oh, immortal Freud, is there nothing he hasn't explained?)

They even stated that "Russian socialism was a direct heir of Russian autocracy"[29] – precisely a direct one, it goes without saying. And, almost in unison, "there is direct continuity between the Tsarist government and communism … there is qualitative similarity."[30] What else could you expect from "Russian history, founded on blood and provocations?"[31] In a review of Agursky's interesting book, Ideology of National Bolshevism, we find that "in reality, traditional, fundamental ideas of the Russian national consciousness began to penetrate into the practice and ideology of the ruling party very early"; "the party ideology was transformed as early as the mid-1920s." Really? Already in

the mid-1920s? How come we missed it at the time? Wasn't it the same mid-1920s when the very words "Russian," "I am Russian" had been considered counter-revolutionary? I remember it well. But, you see, even back then, in the midst of persecution against all that was Russian and Orthodox, the party ideology "began in practice to be persistently guided by the national idea"; "outwardly preserving its internationalist disguise, Soviet authorities actually engaged in the consolidation of the Russian state."[32] Of course! "Contrary to its internationalist declarations, the revolution in Russia has remained a national affair."[33] This "Russia, upturned by revolution, continued to build the people's state."[34]

People's state? How dare they say that, knowing of the Red Terror, of the millions of peasants killed during collectivization, and of the insatiable Gulag?

No, Russia is irrevocably condemned for all her history and in all her forms. Russia is always under suspicion, the "Russian idea" without anti-Semitism "seems to be no longer an idea and not even the Russian one." Indeed, "hostility towards culture is a specific Russian phenomenon"; "how many times have we heard that they are supposedly the only ones in the whole world who have preserved purity and chastity, respecting God in the middle of their native wilderness"[35]; "the greatest soulful sincerity has supposedly found shelter in this crippled land. This soulful sincerity is being presented to us as a kind of national treasure, a unique product like caviar."[36]

Yes, make fun of us Russians; it is for our own good. Unfortunately, there is some truth to these words. But, while expressing them, do not lapse into such hatred. Having long been aware of the terrifying decline of our nation under the communists, it was precisely during those 1970s that we gingerly wrote about a hope of revival of our morals and culture. But strangely enough, the contemporary Jewish authors attacked the idea of Russian revival with a relentless fury, as if (or because?) they feared that Soviet culture would be replaced by the Russian one. "I am afraid that the new 'dawn' of this doomed country would be even more repugnant than its current [1970-1980s] decline."[37]

Looking back from the "democratic" 1990s, we can agree that it was a prophetic declaration. Still, was it said with compassion or with malice?

And here is even more: "Beware, when someone tells you to love your homeland: such love is charged with hatred…. Beware of stories that tell you that in Russia, Russians are the worst off, that Russians suffered the most, and that the Russian population is dwindling" – sure, as we all know, this is a lie! "Be careful when someone tells you about that great statesman … who was assassinated" (i.e., Stolypin) – is that also a deception? No, it is not a deception: "Not because the facts are incorrect" – nevertheless, do not accept even these true facts: "Be careful, be aware!"[38]

There is something extraordinary in this stream of passionate accusations.

Who would have guessed during the fiery 1920s that after the enfeeblement and downfall of that "beautiful" (i.e., Communist) regime in Russia, those Jews, who themselves had suffered much from communism, who seemingly cursed it and ran away from it, would curse and kick not communism, but Russia itself – blast her from Israel and from Europe, and from across the ocean!? There are so many, such confident voices ready to judge Russia's many crimes and failings, her inexhaustible guilt towards the Jews – and they so sincerely believe this guilt to be inexhaustible – almost all of them believe it! Meanwhile, their own people are coyly cleared of any responsibility for their participation in Cheka shootings, for sinking the barges and their doomed human cargo in the White and Caspian seas, for their role in collectivization, the Ukrainian famine and in all the abominations of the Soviet administration, for their talented zeal in brainwashing the "natives." This is not contrition.

We, brothers or strangers, need to share that responsibility.

It would have been cleanest and healthiest to exchange contrition for everything committed.

I will not stop calling the Russians to do that.

And I am inviting the Jews to do the same. To repent not for Trotsky, Kamenev and Zinoviev; they are known and anyway can be brushed aside, "they were not real Jews!" Instead, I invite Jews to look honestly into the oppressive depths of the early Soviet system, at all those "invisible" characters such as Isai Davidovich Berg, who created the infamous "gas wagon"[39] which later brought so much affliction on the Jews themselves, and I call on them to look honestly on those many much more obscure bureaucrats who had pushed papers in the Soviet apparatus, and who had never appeared in light.

However, the Jews would not be Jews if they all behaved the same.

So other voices were heard.

As soon as the great exodus of Jews from the USSR began there were Jews who – fortunately for all, and to their honor – while remaining faithful to Judaism, went above their own feelings and looked at history from that vantage point. It was a joy to hear them, and we hear them still. What hope for the future it gives! Their understanding and support are especially valuable in the face of the violently thinned and drastically depleted ranks of Russian intelligentsia.

A melancholy view, expressed at end of 19th century, comes to mind: "Every country deserves the Jews it has."[40]

It depends where you look.

If it were not for voices from the third wave of emigration and from Israel, one would despair of dialogue and of possibility for mutual understanding between Russians and Jews.

Roman Rutman, a cybernetics worker, had his first article published in the émigré Samizdat in 1973. It was a bright, warm story of how he first decided to emigrate and how it turned out – and even then he showed distinct warmth towards Russia. The title was illustrative: "A bow to those who has gone and my brotherhood to those who remain."[41] Among his very first thoughts during his awakening was "Are we Jews or Russians?"; and among his thoughts on departure there was "Russia, crucified for mankind."

Next year, in 1974, in an article The Ring of Grievances, he proposed to revise "some established ideas on the 'Jewish question'" and "to recognize the risk of overemphasizing these ideas." There were three: (1) "The unusual fate of the Jewish people made them a symbol of human suffering"; (2) "A Jew in Russia has always been a victim of unilateral persecution"; and (3) "Russian society is indebted to the Jewish people." He quoted a phrase from The Gulag Archipelago: "During this war we discovered that the worst thing on earth is to be a Russian" and recognized that the phrase is not artificial or empty, that it is based on war losses, on the revolutionary terror before that, on hunger, on "the wanton destruction of both the nation's head – its cognitive elite, and its feet, the peasantry." Although modern Russian literature and democratic movements preach about the guilt of Russian society before Jews, the author himself prefers to see the "circle of grievances" instead of "the saccharine sentimentality about the troubles and talents of the Jewish people." "To break this "'circle of grievances' one must pull at it from both sides."[42]

Here it is – a thoughtful, friendly and calm voice.

And over these years, we many times heard the firm voice of Michael Kheifetz, a recent GULag prisoner. "A champion of my people, I cannot but sympathize with the nationalists of other peoples."[43] He had the courage to call for Jewish repentance: "The experience of the German people, who have not turned away from their horrifying and criminal past, and who never tried to lay the blame for Nazism on some other culprits, on strangers, etc. but, instead constantly cleansed itself in the fire of national repentance, and thus created a German state that for the first time was admired and respected by all mankind; this experience should, in my opinion, become a paragon for the peoples that participated in the crimes of Bolshevism, including the Jews." "We, Jews, must honestly analyze the role we played in other nations' affairs, the role so extraordinarily foretold by Z. Jabotinsky."[44]

M. Kheifetz demonstrated a truly noble soul when he spoke of "the genuine guilt of assimilated Jews before the native peoples of those countries where they live, the guilt, which cannot and must not allow them to live comfortably in the Diaspora." About Soviet Jewry of the 1920s and 1930s he said: "Who if not us, their bitterly remorseful descendants, has the right to condemn them for this historic mistake [zealous participation in building communism] and the settling of historical scores with Russia for the Pale of Settlement and the pogroms?"[45] (Kheifetz also mentioned that B. Penson and M. Korenblit, who had served labor camp terms along with him, shared his views.)

Almost simultaneously with the words of Kheifetz, by then already an emigrant, Feliks Svetov vividly called out for Jewish repentance from inside the Soviet Union in a Samizdat novel Open the doors to me.[46] (It was no accident that F. Svetov, due to his Jewish perceptivity and intelligence, was one of the first to recognize the beginning of Russian religious revival.)

Later, during a passionate discourse surrounding the dispute between Astafiev and Edelman, Yuri Shtein described "our Ashkenazi-specific personality traits, formed on the basis of our belief of belonging to the chosen people and an insular, small town mentality. Hence, there is a belief in the infallibility of our nation and our claim to a monopoly on suffering…. It is time for us to see ourselves as a normal nation, worthy but not faultless, like all the other peoples of the world. Especially now, that we have our own independent state and have already proved to the world that Jews can fight and plow better than some more populous ethnic groups."[47]

During the left liberal campaign against V. Astafiev, V. Belov, and V. Rasputin, literary historian Maria Shneyerson, who, after emigrating, continued to love Russia dearly and appreciate Russian problems, offered these writers her enthusiastic support.[48]

In the 1970s, a serious, competent, and forewarning book on the destruction of the environment in the USSR under communism was published in the West. Written by a Soviet author, it was naturally published under a pseudonym, B. Komarov. After some time, the author emigrated and we learned his name – Zeev Wolfson. We discovered even more: that he was among the compilers of the album of destroyed and desecrated churches in Central Russia.[49]

Few active intellectuals remained in the defeated Russia, but friendly, sympathetic Jewish forces supported them. With this shortage of people and under the most severe persecution by the authorities, our Russian Public Foundation was established to help victims of persecution; I donated all my royalties for The Gulag Archipelago to this fund; and, starting with its first talented and dedicated manager, Alexander Ginzburg, there were many Jews and half-Jews among the Fund's volunteers. (This gave certain intellectually blind extreme Russian nationalists sufficient reason to brand our Foundation as being "Jewish.")

Similarly, M. Bernshtam, then Y. Felshtinsky and D.Shturman were involved in our study of modern Russian history.

In the fight against communist lies, M. Agursky, D.Shturman, A. Nekrich, M. Geller, and A. Serebrennikov distinguished themselves by their brilliant, fresh, and fair-minded journalism.

We can also recall the heroism of the American professor Julius Epstein and his service to Russia. In self-centered, always self-righteous, and never regretful of any wrongdoings America, he single-handedly revealed the mystery of Operation Keelhaul, how after the end of the war and from their own continent, Americans handed over to Stalinist agents and

therefore certain death, hundreds and thousands of Russian Cossacks, who had naively believed that since they reached the 'land of free' they had been saved.[50]

All these examples should encourage sincere and mutual understanding between Russians and Jews, if only we would not shut it out by intolerance and anger.

Alas, even the mildest remembrance, repentance, and talk of justice elicits severe outcries from the self-appointed guardians of extreme nationalism, both Russian and Jewish. "As soon as Solzhenitsyn had called for national repentance" – meaning among Russians, and the author didn't mind that – "here we are! Our own people are right there in the front line." He did not mention any name specifically but he probably referred to M. Kheifetz. "See, it turns out that we are more to blame, we helped … to install … no, not helped, but simply established the Soviet regime ourselves … were disproportionately present in various organs."[51]

Those who began to speak in a voice of remorse were furiously attacked in an instant. "They prefer to extract from their hurrah-patriotic gut a mouthful of saliva" – what a style and nobility of expression! – "and to thoroughly spit on all 'ancestors,' to curse Trotsky and Bagritsky, Kogan, and Dunaevsky"; "M. Kheifetz invites us to 'purge ourselves in the fire of national repentance.'"[52]

And what a thrashing F. Svetov received for the autobiographical hero of his novel: "A book about conversion to Christianity … will contribute not to an abstract search for repentance, but to a very specific anti-Semitism…. This book is anti-Semitic." Yes, and what is there to repent? –The indefatigable David Markish angrily exclaims. Svetov's hero sees a "betrayal" in the fact that "we desert the country, leaving behind a deplorable condition which is entirely our handiwork: it is we, as it turns out, who staged a bloody revolution, shot the father-tsar, befouled and raped the Orthodox Church and in addition, founded the GULag Archipelago," isn't that right? First, these "comrades" Trotsky, Sverdlov, Berman, and Frenkel are not at all related to the Jews. Second, the very question about someone's collective guilt is wrong.[53] (As to blaming Russians, you see, it is a different thing altogether: it was always acceptable to blame them en masse, from the times of the elder Philotheus.)

David's brother, Sh. Markish reasons as follows, "as to the latest wave of immigrants from Russia … whether in Israel or in the U.S., they do not exhibit real Russophobia … but a self-hatred that grows into direct anti-Semitism is obvious in them only too often."[54]

See, if Jews repent – it is anti-Semitism. (This is yet another new manifestation of that prejudice.)

The Russians should realize their national guilt, "the idea of national repentance cannot be implemented without a clear understanding of national guilt…. The guilt is enormous, and there is no way to shift it on to others. This guilt is not only about the things of past, it is also

about the vile things Russia commits now, and will probably continue committing in the future," as Shragin wrote in the early 1970s. [55]

Well, we too tirelessly call the Russians to repent; without penitence, we will not have a future. After all, only those who were directly affected by communism recognized its evils. Those who were not affected tried not to notice the atrocities and later on to forget and forgive them, to the extent that now they do not even understand what to repent of. (Even more so those who themselves committed the crimes.)

Every day we are burning with shame for our unsettled people.

And we love it too. And we do not envision our lives without it.

And yet, for some reason, we have not lost all faith in it.

Still, is it absolutely certain that you had no part in our great guilt, in our unsuccessful history?

Here, Shimon Markish referred to Jabotinsky's1920s article. "Jabotinsky several times (on different occasions) observed that Russia is a foreign country to us, our interest in her should be detached, cool, though sympathetic; her anxiety, grief and joy are not ours, and our feelings are foreign to her too." Markish added: "That's also my attitude towards Russian worries." And he invites us to "call a spade a spade. However, regarding this delicate point even free western Russians are not awesomely courageous…. I prefer to deal with enemies."[56]

Yet this sentence should be divided into two: is it the case that to "call a spade a spade" and to speak frankly mean being an enemy? Well, there is a Russian proverb: do not love the agreeable; love the disputers.

I invite all, including Jews, to abandon this fear of bluntness, to stop perceiving honesty as hostility. We must abandon it historically! Abandon it forever!

In this book, I "call a spade a spade". And at no time do I feel that in doing so it is being hostile to the Jews. I have written more sympathetically than many Jews write about Russians.

The purpose of this book, reflected even in its title, is this: we should understand each other, we should recognize each other's standpoint and feelings. With this book, I want to extend a handshake of understanding – for all our future.

But we must do so mutually!

This interweaving of Jewish and Russian destinies since the 18th century which has so explosively manifested itself in the 20th century, has a profound historical meaning, and we

should not lose it in the future. Here, perhaps, lies the Divine Intent which we must strive to unravel – to discern its mystery and to do what must be done.

And it seems obvious that to know the truth about our shared past is a moral imperative for Jews and Russians alike.

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Chapter 26: The beginning of Exodus

The Age of Exodus, as Jews themselves would soon name it, began rather silently: its start can be traced to a December 1966 article in Izvestiya, where the Soviet authorities magnanimously approved "family reunification," and under this "banner the Jews were given the right to leave the USSR"[1]. And then, half a year later, the historic Six-Day War broke out. "Like any epic, this Exodus began with a miracle. And as it should be in an epic, three miracles were revealed to the Jews of Russia – to the Exodus generation": the miracle of the foundation of Israel, "the miracle of the Purim 1953" (that is, Stalin's death), and "the miracle of the joyous, brilliant, intoxicating victory of 1967."[2]

The Six-Day War gave a strong and irreversible push to the ethnic consciousness of the Soviet Jews and delivered a blow to the desire of many to assimilate. It created among Jews a powerful motivation for national self-education and the study of Hebrew (within a framework of makeshift centers) and gave rise to pro-emigration attitudes.

How did the majority of Soviet Jews perceive themselves by the end of the 1960s, on the eve of Exodus? No, those who retrospectively write of a constant feeling of oppression and stress do not distort their memories: "Hearing the word 'Jew,' they cringe, as if expecting a blow…. They themselves use this sacramental word as rarely as possible, and when they do have to say it, they force the word out as quickly as possible and in a suppressed voice, as if they were seized by the throat…. Among such people there are those who are gripped by the eternal incurable fear ingrained in their mentality."[3] Or take a Jewish author who wrote of spending her entire professional life worrying that her work would be rejected only because of her nationality [ethnicity in American terminology].[4] Despite having an apparently higher standard of living than the general population, many Jews still harbored this sense of oppression.

Indeed, cultivated Jews complained more of cultural rather than economic oppression. "The Soviet Jews are trying … to retain their presence in the Russian culture. They struggle to retain the Russian culture in their inner selves."[5] Dora Shturman recalls: "When the Russian Jews, whose interests are chained to Russia, are suddenly deprived – even if only on paper or in words – of their right to engage in the Russian life, to participate in the Russian history, as if they were interlopers or strangers, they feel offended and bewildered. With the appearance of Tamizdat [a Russian neologism for dissident self-published (Samizdat) literature, published outside the USSR (from the Russian word, 'tam', meaning 'there' or 'out there')] and Samizdat, the xenophobia felt by some Russian authors toward Jews who sincerely identified themselves as Russians manifested itself for the first time in many years, not only on the street level and on the level of state bureaucracy, but appeared on the elite intellectual level, even among dissidents. Naturally, this surprised Jews who identified with Russians."[6] Galich: "Many people brought up in the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s used to regard

themselves as Russians from their earliest years, in fact from birth, and indeed … they share all their values and thoughts with the Russian culture."[7]

Another author drew the portrait of "the average modern Russian Jew," who "would serve this country with good faith and fidelity. He … had carefully examined and identified his own flaws. He had become aware of them…. And now he tries to get rid of them … he has stopped arms flourishing. He has gotten rid of his national peculiarities of speech which were carried over into Russian…. At some point he would aspire to become equal with the Russians, to be indistinguishable from them." And so: "You might not hear the word 'Jew' for years on end. Perhaps, many have even forgotten that you are a Jew. Yet you can never forget it yourself. It is this silence that always reminds you who you are. It creates such an explosive tension inside you, that when you do hear the word 'Jew,' it sounds like fate's blow." This is a very telling account. The same author describes the cost of this transformation into a Russian. "He had left behind too much" and become spiritually impoverished. "Now, when he needs those capacious, rich and flexible words, he can't find them….When he looks for but can't find the right word, something dies inside him," he had lost "the melodic intonation of Jewish speech" with all its "gaiety, playfulness, mirth, tenacity, and irony."[8]

Of course, these exquisite feelings did not worry each Soviet Jew; it was the lot of the tiniest minority among them, the top cultural stratum, those who genuinely and persistently tried to identify with Russians. It was them who G. Pomeranz spoke about (though he made a generalization for the whole intelligentsia): "Everywhere, we are not quite out of place. Everywhere, we are not quite in our place"; we "have become something like non-Israeli Jews, the people of the air, who lost all their roots in their mundane existence."[9]

Very well put.

A. Voronel develops the same theme: "I clearly see all the sham of their [Jews'] existence in Russia today."[10]

If there's no merging, there will always be alienation.

Nathan Sharansky often mentioned that from a certain point he started to feel being different from the others in Russia.

During the Dymshits–Kuznetsov hijacking affair trial in December 1970, L. Hnoh openly stated what he had apparently nurtured for quite a while: "It became unbearable for me to live in a country I don't regard as my own."

What integrity of mind and courage of word!

So it was this feeling that grew among the Soviet Jews, and now increasingly among the broad Jewish masses.

Later, in 1982, another Jewish journalist put it like thus: "I am a stranger. I am a stranger in my own country which I love abstractly but fear in reality."[11]

In the beginning of the 1970s, in a conversation with L.K. Chukovskaya she told me (I made a note at the time): "This Exodus was forced on Jewry. I pity those whom the Russians made feel Jewish. The Soviet Jews have already lost their sense of Jewishness and I consider this artificial awakening of their national sense to be specious."

This was far from the truth. Despite the fact that she socialized with many Jews from both capitals, Chukovskaya was mistaken. This Jewish national awakening was not artificial or forced; it was an absolutely natural and even necessary milestone of Jewish history. It was the sudden realization that "one can say 'Jew' proudly!"[12]

Another Jewish publicist reflected on the experience of his generation of young people in the USSR: "So what are we – the 'grandchildren' and heirs of that cruel experiment, who broke through the shell and hatched here in Israel – what are we to say about our fathers and grandfathers? Should we blame them that they didn't raise us in Jewish way? Yet our very sense of Jewishness was in great part the result of their (as well as our) failures, catastrophes and despair. So let us appreciate this past…. Is it up to us to throw stones at the shattered skulls of the romantics of yesterday?"[13]

This sincerely and honestly expressed intergenerational connection to the fathers and grandfathers, who were so enthusiastic in the early Soviet years, greatly supplements the whole picture. (You can read between the lines the author's rejection of the benefits and advantages of the 'new class' that has replaced those 'romantics.')

A Samizdat article properly pointed out: "The opinion that the current rise in Jewish ethnic consciousness among assimilated Soviet Jews is just a reaction to the re-emergence of anti-Semitism seems deeply mistaken. What we have here is more likely a coincidence."[14]

Different contemporaries described the development of their Jewish self-identification somewhat differently. Some wrote that "nearly everyone agreed that nothing was happening in the 1960s" in the sense of national revival, though "after the war of 1967 things began to change." Yet it was the plane hijacking incident that led to the breakthrough.[15] Others suggest that "Jewish groups were already forming in the mid-1960s in Leningrad, Moscow, and Riga," and that by the end of the decade a Jewish "underground center" was established in Leningrad. Yet what kind of conspiracy could it be? "Makeshift centers to study Hebrew and Jewish history were formed … and not really for study of Hebrew, but rather for the socialization of people who wished to study it. Actual language usually was learnt not beyond two to three hundred words…. As a rule, all participants were state functionaries, and, like their entire milieu, far removed from the Jewish religion and national traditions alike." "The Jews of the 1960s had only a vague conception of Zionism." And yet, "we felt ourselves to be sufficiently Jewish, and saw no need whatsoever for any sort of additional 'Jewish educational remedy.'" In response to the

barrage of anti-Israeli propaganda, "the inner sympathy towards Jewry and to Israel" grew. "Even if we were told then that Israel had abandoned Judaism, it would make no difference for us." And then the movement "began to transform from an underground to a mass, open … 'parlour' phenomenon." Still, "then nobody believed in the possibility of emigration, at least in our time, yet everyone considered a quite real possibility of ending up in a camp."[16] (The interviewer comments: "Alas, it is too short a step from conspiracy to 'devilry'. I saw this in the Jewish movement of the 1970s, after the trials in Leningrad.")[17]

Thus, the return to Jewish culture started and continued without counting on emigration and initially did not affect the everyday life of the participants. "I'm not sure that Aliyah [return to Israel] began because of Zionists," as those first Zionist groups were too weak for this. "To a certain extent, it was the Soviet government that triggered the process by raising a tremendous noise around the Six-Day War. The Soviet press painted the image of a warlike invincible Jew, and this image successfully offset the inferiority complex of the Soviet Jews."[18]

But "hide your 'Judaic terror' from your co-workers' eyes, from your neighbors' ears!" At first, there was a deep fear: "these scraps of paper, bearing your contact details, were as if you were signing a sentence for yourself, for your children, for your relatives." Yet soon "we ceased whispering, we began to speak aloud," "to prepare and celebrate" the Jewish holidays and "study history and Hebrew." And already from the end of 1969 "the Jews by the tens and hundreds began signing open letters to the 'public abroad.' They demanded to be 'released' to Israel."[19] Soviet Jewry, "separated from world Jewry, trapped in the melting pot of the despotic Stalinist empire … was seemingly irredeemably lost for Jewry – and yet suddenly the Zionist movement was reborn and the ancient Moses' appeal trumpeted again: 'Let my people go!'"[20]

"In 1970 the whole world began to talk about Russian Jews." They "rose, they became determined….There is only one barrier separating them from their dream – the barrier of governmental prohibition. To break through, to breech it, to fly through it was their only wish…. 'Flee from Northern Babylon!'" was the behest of the arrested plane hijackers, the group led by E. Kuznetsov and M. Dymshits.[21] In December 1970 during their trial in Leningrad "they weren't silent, they didn't evade, they openly declared that they wanted to steal a plane to fly it across the border to Israel. Remember, they faced the death sentence! Their 'confessions' were in essence the declarations of Zionism."[22] A few months later in May 1971, there was a trial of the 'Zionist organizations of Leningrad,' soon followed by similar trials in Riga and Kishinev.

These trials, especially the two Leningrad trials, became the new powerful stimulus for the development of the Jewish ethnic consciousness. A new Samizdat journal, The Jews in the USSR, began to circulate soon afterwards, in October 1972. It vividly reported on the struggle for the legalization of emigration to Israel and covered the struggle for the right to freely develop Jewish culture in the USSR.

But even at this point only a minority of Jews were involved in the nascent emigration movement. "It seems that the life was easier for the Soviet Jews when they knew that they had no choice, that they only could persevere and adapt, than now, when they've got a choice of where to live and what to do…. The first wave that fled from Russia at the end of the 1960s was motivated only by the goal of spending the rest of their lives in the only country without anti-Semitism, Israel."[23] (As the author noted, this does not include those who emigrated for personal enrichment.)

And "a part of Soviet Jewry would happily repudiate their national identity, if they were allowed to do so."[24] – so scared they were. This section included those Jews who cursed 'that Israel,' claiming that it is because of Israel that law-abiding Jews are often being prevented from career advancement: "because of those leaving, we too will suffer."

The Soviet government could not but be alarmed by this unexpected (for them as for the whole world) awakening of ethnic consciousness among Soviet Jews. It stepped up propaganda efforts against Israel and Zionism, to scare away the newly conscious. In March 1970 it made use of that well-worn Soviet trick, to get the denunciation from the mouths of the "people themselves," in this case from the people of "Jewish nationality." So the authorities staged a denunciatory public press-conference and it was dutifully attended not only by the most hypocritical "official Jews" such as Vergelis, Dragunsky, Chakovsky, Bezymensky, Dolmatovsky, the film director Donsky, the propagandists Mitin and Mintz, but also by prominent people who could easily refuse to participate in the spectacle and in signing the "Declaration" without significant repercussions for themselves. Among the latter were: Byalik: the members of Academy, Frumkin and Kassirsky: the internationally renowned musicians, Fliyer and Zak; the actors, Plisetskaya, Bystritskaya, and Pluchek. But sign it they did. The "Declaration" "heaped scorn on the aggression carried by the Israeli ruling circles … which resurrects the barbarism of the Hitlerites"; "Zionism has always been an expression of the chauvinist views of the Jewish bourgeois and its Jewish raving"; and the signatories intend "to open the eyes of the gullible victims of Zionist propaganda": "under the guidance of the Leninist party, working Jews have gained full freedom from the hated Tsarism." Amazing, see who was the real oppressor? The one already dead for half a century!

But times had changed by this point. The "official Jews" were publicly rebuked by I. Zilberberg, a young engineer who had decided to irrevocably cut ties with this country and leave. He circulated an open letter in response to the "Declaration" in Samizdat, calling its signatories "lackey souls", and repudiated his former faith in communism: "we naively placed our hopes in 'our' Jews – the Kaganovichs, the Erenburgs, etc." (So, after all, they had once indeed placed their hopes there?) At the same time he criticised Russians: after the 1950s, did "Russians repent and were they contrite … and, after spilling a meagre few tears about the past … did they swear love and commitment to their new-found brothers?" In his mind there was no doubt that Russian guilt Jews was entirely one-sided.

Such events continued. Another Samizdat open letter became famous a year later, this one by the hitherto successful film director Mikhail Kalik, who had now been expelled from the Union of Soviet film-makers because he declared his intention to leave for Israel. Kalik unexpectedly addressed a letter about his loyalty to Jewish culture "to the Russian intelligentsia." It looked as if he had spent his life in the USSR not among the successful, but had suffered for years among the oppressed, striving for freedom. And now, leaving, he lectured this sluggish Russian intelligentsia from the moral high ground of his victimhood. "So you will stay … with your silence, with your 'obedient enthusiasm?' Who then will take care for the moral health of the nation, the country, the society?"

Six months later there was another open letter, this time from the Soviet writer Grigory Svirsky. He was driven to this by the fact that he hadn't been published for several years and even his name had been removed from the Encyclopaedia of Literature in punishment for speaking out against anti-Semitism at the Central Literary House in 1968. This punishment he termed "murder," with understandable fire, though he forgot to glance back and to see how many others suffered in this regard. "I do not know how to live from now on," he wrote to the Union of Writers. (This was a sentiment common to all 6,000 members of the union: they all believed that the government was bound to feed them for their literary work). These were "the reasons which made me, a man of Russian culture, what is more a Russian writer and an expert on Russian literature, feel myself to be a Jew and to come to the irrevocable decision to leave with my family to Israel"; "I wish to become an Israeli writer." (But he achieved no such transformation of his profession from one nation to another. Svirsky, like many previous emigrants, had not realized how difficult he would find adjusting to Israel, and chose to leave there too.)

The hostile anti-Russian feelings and claims we find in so many voices of the awakened Jewish consciousness surprise and bewilder us, making our hearts bleed. Yet in these feelings of the "mature ferocity" we do not hear any apology proffered by our Jewish brothers for at least the events of 1920s. There isn't a shadow of appreciation that Russians too are a wronged people. However, we heard some other voices among the "ferocious" in the previous chapter. Looking back on those times when they were already in Israel, they sometimes gave a more sober account: "we spent too much time settling debts with Russia in Jews in the USSR" at the expense even of devoting "too little to Israel and our life there … and thinking too little about the future."[25]

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For the ordinary mundane and unarmed living, the prospect of breaking the steel shell that had enveloped the USSR seemed an impossible and hopeless task. But then they despaired – and had to try – and something gave! The struggle for the right to emigrate to Israel was characterised throughout by both determination and inventiveness: issuing complaints to the Supreme Soviet, demonstrations and hunger strikes by the "refuseniks" (as Jews who had been refused exit to Israel called themselves); seminars by fired Jewish professors on

the pretext of wanting "to maintain their professional qualifications"; the organization in Moscow of an international symposium of scientists (at the end of 1976); finally, refusal to undergo national service.

Of course, this struggle could only be successful with strong support from Jewish communities abroad. "For us the existence in the world of Jewish solidarity was a startling discovery and the only glimmer of hope in that dark time" remembers one of the first refuseniks.[26] There was also substantial material assistance: "among refuseniks in Moscow there was born a particular sort of independence, founded on powerful economic support from Jews abroad."[27] And so they attached even more hopes to assistance from the West, now expecting similarly powerful public and even political help.

This support had its first test in 1972. Somebody in the higher echelons of the Soviet government reasoned as follows: here we have the Jewish intelligentsia, educated for free in the Soviet system and then provided with opportunities to pursue their academic careers, and now they just leave for abroad to work there with all these benefits subsidized by the Soviet state. Would it not be just to institute a tax on this? Why should the country prepare for free educated specialists, taking up the places loyal citizens might have had, only to have them use their skills in other countries? And so they started to prepare a law to institute this tax. This plan was no secret, and quickly became known and widely discussed in Jewish circles. It became law on August 3, 1972 in the Order of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR "On the compensation by citizens of the USSR, who are leaving to permanently live abroad, of the government expenditure on their education." The amount proscribed was between 3,600 and 9,800 roubles, depending on the rank of the university (3,600 was in those days the yearly salary of an ordinary senior researcher without a doctorate).

A storm of international indignation erupted. During the 55 years of its existence, none of the monstrous list of the USSR's crimes had caused as united an international protest as this tax on educated emigrants. American academics, 5,000 in number, signed a protest (Autumn 1972); and two thirds of American senators worked together to stop an expected favorable trade agreement with the USSR. European parliamentarians behaved similarly. For their part, 500 Soviet Jews sent an open letter to UN General Secretary Kurt Waldheim (nobody yet suspected that he too would soon be damned) describing: "serfdom for those with a higher education." (In reaching for a phrase they failed to realize how this would sound in a country which had genuine kolkhoz serfdom).

The Soviet government buckled, and consigned the order to the scrapheap.

As to the agreement on trade? In April 1973, union leader George Meany argued that the agreement was neither in the interest of the USA nor would it ease international tensions, but the senators were concerned only about Soviet Jews and ignored these arguments. They passed the agreement but adding the "Jackson amendment," which stated that it would only be agreed to once Jews were allowed to leave the USSR freely. And so the whole world

heard the message coming from the American capital: we will help the Soviet government if they release from their country, not everyone, but specifically and only Jews.

Nobody declared loud and clear: gentlemen, for 55 years it has been but a dream to escape from under the hated Soviet regime, not for hundreds of thousands but for millions of our fellow citizens; but nobody, ever had the right to leave. And yet the political and social leaders of the West never showed surprise, never protested, never moved to punish the Soviet government with trade restrictions. (There was one unsuccessful attempt in 1931 to organise a campaign against Soviet dumping of lumber, a practise made possible only by the use of cheap convict labour, but even this campaign was apparently motivated by commercial competition). 15 million peasants were destroyed in the "dekulakisation," 6 million peasants were starved to death in 1932, not even to mention the mass executions and millions who died in the camps; and at the same time it was fine to politely sign agreements with Soviet leaders, to lend them money, to shake their "honest hands", to seek their support, and to boast of all this in front of your parliaments. But once it was specifically Jews that became the target, then a spark of sympathy ran through the West and it became clear just what sort of regime this was. (In 1972 I made a note on a scrap of paper: "You've realized [what's going on], thank God. But for how long will your realisation last? All it takes is for the problems Jews had with emigrating to be resolved, and you'll become deaf, blind and uncomprehending again to the entirety of what is going on, to the problems of Russia and of communism.")

"You cannot imagine the enthusiasm with which it [the Jackson amendment] was met by Jews in Russia…. 'Finally a lever strong enough to shift the powers in the USSR is discovered.'"[28] Yet suddenly in 1975 the Jackson amendment became an irrelevance, as the Soviet government unexpectedly turned down the offer of the trade agreement with the US. (Or it rather calculated that it could get more advantages from other competing countries).

The Soviet refusal made an impression on Jewish activists in the USSR and abroad, but not for long. Both in America and Europe support for Jewish emigration out of the USSR became louder. "The National Conference in Defence of Soviet Jews." "The Union on Solidarity with Soviet Jewry." "The Student Committee of Struggle for Soviet Jewry." On the "Day of National Solidarity with Soviet Jews" more than 100,000 demonstrated in Manhattan, including senators Jackson and Humphrey (both were running for the Democratic nomination for President.) "Hundreds different protests took place…. The largest of these were the yearly 'Solidarity Sundays' – demonstrations and rallies in New York which were attended by up to 250,000 people (these ran from 1974-1987)."[29] A three day meeting of 18 Nobel laureates in support of the Corresponding Member of Academy Levich took place in Oxford. Another 650 academics from across the world gave their support – and Levich was allowed to emigrate. In January 1978 more than a hundred American academics sent a telegram to Brezhnev demanding that he allow professor Meiman to go abroad. Another

worldwide campaign ended in another success: the mathematician Chudnovsky received permission to leave for a medical procedure unavailable in the USSR. It was not just the famous: often a name until then unheard of would be trumpeted across the world and then returned to obscurity. For example, we heard it especially loudly in May 1978, when the world press told us a heart-rending story: a seven year old Moscow girl Jessica Katz had an incurable illness, and her parents were not allowed to go to the States! A personal intervention from Senator Edward Kennedy followed, and presto! Success! The press rejoiced. The main news on every television channel broadcast the meeting at the airport, the tears of happiness, the girl held aloft. The Russian Voice of America devoted a whole broadcast to how Jessica Katz was saved (failing to notice that Russian families with sick children still faced the same impenetrable wall). A medical examination later showed that Jessica wasn't ill at all, and that her cunning parents had fooled the whole world to ensure her leaving. (A fact acknowledged through gritted teeth on the radio, and then buried. Who else would be forgiven such a lie?) Similarly, the hunger strike of V. Borisov (December 1976) who had already spent nine years in a 'mental asylum' was reported by the Voice of America no differently from the 15 days of imprisonment of Ilya Levin, and if anything, more attention was given to the latter. All a few refuseniks had to do was sign a declaration about their inability to leave the USSR and it was immediately reported by the Freedom, Voice of America, the BBC and by the other most important sources of mass information, so much so that it is hard now to believe how loudly they were trumpeted.

Of course it has to be noted that all the pomp surrounding the appearance of a Soviet Jewish movement served to awaken among worldwide Jewry, including those in America, an exciting conception of themselves as a nation. "Prophetic obsession of the first Zionists" in the USSR "induced exulting sympathy among the Western Jews." "The Western Jews saw their own ideals in action. They began to believe in Russian Jews … that meant for them believing in their own best qualities…. All that which Western Jews wanted to see around themselves and … didn't see."[30] Others said, with a penetrating irony: "The offered product (an insurrectionary Jewish spirit) found a delighted buyer (American Jews). Neither America, nor American Jews are at all interested in Jews from the USSR in themselves. The product bought was precisely the spirit of Jewish revolt. The Jews of America (and with them the Jews of London, Amsterdam, Paris, etc.), whose sense of Jewishness had been excited by the Six-Day War triumph … saw the chance to participate…. It was a comfortable 'struggle'… that moreover did not involve any great exertion."[31]

However, it cannot be denied that these inspirations both here and there merged, and worked together to destabilise the walls of the steel shell of the old Soviet Union.

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It is the general opinion that mass Jewish emigration from the USSR began in 1971, when 13,000 people left (98% to Israel). It was 32,000 in 1972, 35,000 in 1973 (the proportion going to Israel varying from 85% to 100%)[32]. However these were for the most part not

from the ethnically Russian areas, but from Georgia and the Baltic. (A Jewish delegate to an international congress declared that "Georgia is a country without anti-Semitism"; many Georgian Jews later became disappointed with their move to Israel and wanted to go back). There was no mass movement from the central part of the USSR. Later, when leaving was made more difficult, some expressed a serious regret (R. Nudelman): the "tardy courage of future refuseniks might have, perhaps, been unnecessary if they had taken advantage of the breech made when they'd had the chance." Someone disagrees: "But people need time to mature! … See how long it took before we understood that we must not stay, that it is simply a crime against your own children."[33]

"Ho, ho, [come forth], and flee from the land of the north, saith the LORD." (Zech 2:6)

Nonetheless, the excitement of Jewish emigration took root in Russian and Ukrainian towns too. By March 1973, 700,000 requests to emigrate had been registered. However, autumn 1973 saw the Yom Kippur War, and the desire of many to emigrate suddenly diminished. "Israel's image changed sharply after the Yom Kippur War. Instead of a secure and brave rich country, with confidence in tomorrow and a united leadership, Israel unexpectedly appeared before the world as confused, flabby, ripped apart by internal contradictions. The standard of living of the population fell sharply."[34]

As a result only 20,000 Jews left the USSR in 1974. In 1975-76, "up to 50% of emigrating Soviet Jews" once in the stopover point of Vienna "went … past Israel. This period saw the birth of the term 'directists'" – that is to say those who went directly to the United States.[35] After 1977, their numbers "varied from 70 to 98 percent."[36]

"Frankly, this is understandable. The Jewish state had been conceived as a national refuge for Jews of the whole world, the refuge which, to begin with, guarantees them a safe existence. But this did not transpire. The country was in the line of fire for many years."[37]

What is more "it soon became clear that Israel needed not intellectual Soviet Jews … but a national Jewish intelligentsia." At this point "thinking Jews … realised with a horror that in the way they had defined themselves their whole life they had no place in Israel," because as it turned out for Israel you had to be immersed in Jewish national culture – and so only then "the arrivals realised their tragic mistake: there had been no point to leaving Russia"[38] (although this was also due to the loss of social position) – and letters back warned those who hadn't left yet of this. "Their tone and content at that time was almost universally negative. Israel was presented as a country where the government intervenes in and seeks to act paternally in all aspects of a citizen's life."[39] "A prejudice against emigration to Israel began to form among many as early as the mid-1970s."[40] "The firm opinion of Israel that the Moscow and Leningrad intelligentsia began to acquire was of a closed, spiritually impoverished society, buried in its own narrow national problems and letting today's ideological demands have control over the culture…. At best … it is a cultural backwater, at worst … yet another totalitarian government, lacking only a coercive apparatus."[41] "Many

Soviet Jews gained the impression, not without reason, that in leaving the USSR for Israel they were exchanging one authoritarian regime for another."[42]

When in 1972-73 more than 30,000 Soviet Jews had left for Israel per year, Golda Meir used to meet them personally at the airport and wept, and the Israeli press called their mass arrivals "the Miracle of the 20th century." Back then "everyone left for Israel. Those who took the road to Rome," that is to say not to Israel, "were pointed out. But then the number of arrivals started to fall from year to year. It decreased from tens of thousands to thousands, from thousands to hundreds, from hundreds to a few lone individuals. In Vienna, it was no longer those taking the road to Rome [the next stop on the road to the final desired destination, usually the U.S.] who were pointed out, it was those 'loners,' those 'clowns,' those 'nuts,' who still left for Israel."[43] "Back then Israel used to be the 'norm' and you had to explain why you were going 'past' it, but it was the other way round now: it was those planning to leave for Israel that often had to explain their decision."[44]

"Only the first wave was idealistic"; "starting with 1974, so to speak the second echelon of Jews began to leave the USSR, and for those Israel might have been attractive, but mainly from a distance."[45] Another's consideration: "Perhaps the phenomenon of neshira [neshira – dispersal on the way to Israel; noshrim – the dispersed ones] is somehow connected to the fact that initial emigration used to be from the hinterlands [of the USSR], where [Jewish] traditions were strong, and now it's more from the centre, where Jews have substantially sundered themselves from their traditions."[46]

Anyway, "the more open were the doors into Israel, the less Jewish was the efflux," the majority of activists barely knowing the Hebrew alphabet.[47] "Not to find their Jewishness, but to get rid of it … was now the main reason for emigration."[48] They joked in Israel that "the world has not been filled with the clatter of Jewish feet running to settle in their own home…. Subsequent waves quickly took into account the mistake of the vanguard, and instead enthusiastically leapt en masse to where others' hands had already built their own life. En masse, it should be noted, for here finally was that much spoken of 'Jewish unity.'"[49] But of course these people "left the USSR in search of 'intellectual freedom,' and so must live in Germany or England" or more simply in the United States.[50] And a popular excuse was that the Diaspora is needed as "somebody has to give money to resource-less Israel and to make noise when it is being bullied! But on the other hand, the Diaspora perpetuates anti-Semitism."[51]

A. Voronel made a broader point here: ""The situation of Russian Jews and the problem of their liberation is a reflection of the all-Jewish crisis…. The problems of Soviet Jews help us to see the disarray in our own ranks"; "the cynicism of Soviet Jews" in using calls from made up relatives in Israel instead of "accepting their fate, the Way of Honour, is nothing more than a reflection of the cynicism and the rot affecting the whole Jewish (and non-Jewish) world"; "questions of conscience move further and further into background under the influence of the business, the competition and the unlimited possibilities of the Free World."[52]

So it's all quite simple – it was just a mass escape from the harsh Soviet life to the easy Western one, quite understandable on a human level. But then what's about "repatriation?" And what is the "spiritual superiority" of those who dared to leave over those who stayed in the "country of slaves"? In fighting in those days for emigration Soviet Jews loudly demanded: "Let my people go!" But that was a truncated quote. The Bible said: "Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness." (Ex. 5:1) Yet somehow too many of those released went not into the desert, but to the abundance of America.

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Can we nonetheless say that in the early years of sudden and successful emigration to Israel, it was the Zionists beliefs and ambitions that acted as the prime stimulus for Jews to leave? The testimony of various Jewish writers would suggest not.

"The Soviet situation of the end of the 1960s was one of Aliyah, not of a Zionist movement. There were many people psychologically ready to flee the USSR. What can be called a Zionist movement was entirely subsidiary to this group of people."[53] Those who joined makeshift centres dedicated to the actual study of Jewish history and culture "were mostly characterised by a complete lack of the careerism so common among the Soviet-Jewish intelligentsia. This was why they dedicated the entirety of their free time to Jewish affairs."[54] For them the "era of the Hebrew teachers" had started even as early as the end of the 1970s, and by the beginning of the 1980s these "Torah teachers were the only ones who still influenced the minds."[55]

The motives of many others who emigrated are explained as follows: "The Soviet government has placed obstacles in the way of achieving the most important things – professional advancement," and so "Jewry is in danger of degradation."[56] "They were driven into Jewishness, and then into Zionism … by their faceless bureaucratic nemesis."[57] "Many … had never encountered anti-Semitism or political persecution. What burdened them was the dead end that their lives as Soviet Jews had become – as bearers of a contradiction from which they could free themselves neither by 'assimilation' nor by their 'Jewishness'"[58] "There was a growing sense of incompatibility and sorrow"; "dozens and dozens of dolts … are dragging you into insignificance … are pushing you to the bottom."[59] So came the longing to escape the Soviet Union. "This bright hope, when a man under the complete control of the Soviet government could in three months become free … was genuinely exhilarating."[60]

Of course, a complex emotional environment developed around the act of departure. A writer says: the majority of Soviet Jews are "using the same 'Zionist' door … they sadly leave that familiar, that tolerant Russia" (a slip, but one that is closer to the truth, as the author had meant to say "tolerated by" Jews)[61]. Or said thusly: "The vast majority decided to emigrate with their heads, while their insides," that is to say concern with being part of a

country and its traditions, "were against."[62] No one can judge to what extent this was a "majority." But as we've seen the mood varied from the good poetry of Liya Vladimorova:

But for you my beloved, for you the proud,

I bequest the memories and the departure

to the then-popular joke: "Could the last person to leave please turn off the lights."

This growing desire to emigrate among Soviet Jews coincided with the beginning of the "dissident" movement in the USSR. These developments were not entirely independent: "for some of them [Jewish intellectuals] 'Jewish ethnic consciousness in the USSR' was a new vector of intellectual development … a new form of heterodoxy,"[63] and they regarded their own impatient escape from the country as also a desperately important political cause. In essence, the dilemma facing the Zionists at the start of the 20th century was repeated: if it is your aim to leave Russia, should you at the same time maintain a political struggle within it? Back then, most had answered "yes" to the struggle; now, most answered "no." But an increasingly daredevil attitude to emigration could not but feed a similarly daredevil attitude to politics, and sometimes the daredevils were one and the same. So for example (in 1976) several activists in the Jewish movement — V. Rubin, A. Sharansky, V. Slepak — together made an independent decision to support the "Helsinki Group" of dissidents, "but this was regarded in Jewish circles as an unjustifiable and unreasonable risk," as it would lead "to the immediate and total escalation of the government's repression of Jewish activism," and would moreover turn the Jewish movement "into the property of dissidents."[64]

On the other side, many dissidents took advantage of the synchronicity of the two movements, and used emigration as a means of escape from their political battlefield for their own safety. They found theoretical justifications for this: "Any honest man in the USSR is an eternal debtor to Israel, and here is why…. The emigration breech was made in the iron curtain thanks to Israel … it protects the rear of those few people willing to oppose the tyranny of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union [CPSU] and to fight for human rights in the USSR. The absence of this 'emergency exit' would be deadly to the current democratic movement."[65]

It has to be admitted that this is a very cynical justification, and that it says little good of the dissident movement as a whole. A hostile critic then noted: "these 'opponents' [of the CPSU] are playing an odd game: they become involved in the democratic movement, already sure of an 'emergency exit' for themselves. But by this they demonstrate the temporary and inconsequential character of their activity. Do potential emigrants have the right to speak of changing Russia, or especially on behalf of Russia?"[66]

One dissident science fiction author (and later, after emigration, a Russian Orthodox priest) suggested this formulation, that Jewish emigration creates "a revolution in the mind of Soviet man"; "the Jews, in fighting for the right to leave, become transformed into fighters

for freedom" in general…."The Jewish movement serves as a social gland that begins to secrete the hormones of rights awareness;" it has become "a sort of ferment perpetuating dissidence." "Russia is becoming 'deserted,'" "that 'abroad,' so mythical before, is becoming populated by our own people," "the Jewish Exodus … is gradually leading totalitarian Soviet Moscow to the plains of freedom."[67]

This view was readily accepted and in the coming years came to be loudly trumpeted: "the right to emigrate is the primary human right." It was repeated often and in unison that this was an "enforced escape," and "talk about the privileged position Jews occupy with regards to emigration is slander."[68]

Yes, taking a lifeboat from a sinking ship is indeed an act of necessity. But to own a lifeboat is a great privilege, and after the gruelling ordeals of half a century in the USSR Jews owned one, while the rest did not. Those more perceptive expressed a more conscientious feeling: "It is fine to fight for the repatriation of Jews, it is understandable, and it is fine to fight for the right to emigrate for everyone – that too is understandable; but you cannot fight for the right to emigrate but, for some reason, only for Jews."[69] Contrary to the self-satisfied theoreticians of emigration, and their belief that it brought all Soviet people closer to emigrating abroad and so partly freed them, in reality those unable to emigrate came to feel more hopeless, to an even greater extent fooled and enslaved. There were emigrants who understood this: "What is cruellest about this situation is that it is Jews who are leaving. It has bizarrely become a question of something akin to a certificate of authenticity."[70]

Precisely. But they chose to blind themselves to this.

What could the remaining residents of "totalitarian Moscow" think? There was a great variety of responses, from grievance ("You, Jews, are allowed to leave and we aren't…") to the despair of intellectuals. L.K Chukovksaya expressed it in conversation to me: "Dozens of valuable people are leaving, and as a result human bonds vital for the country are ripped apart. The knots that hold together the fabric of culture are being undone."

To repeat the lesson: "Russia is becoming deserted."

We can read the thoughtful comments of an emigrant Jewish author about this Departure: "Russian Jewry were pathfinders in their experiment to merge with the Russian people and Russian culture, they became involved in Russia's fate and history, and, repulsed away as if by a similarly charged body, left." (What an accurate and penetrating comparison!) "What is most stunning about this Departure is how, at the moment of greatest assimilation, voluntary it was…. The pathetic character of the Russian Aliyah of the 1970s … was that we were not exiled from the country on a king's order or by the decision of party and parliament, and we were not fleeing to save ourselves from the whips of an enraged popular pogrom … this fact is not immediately obvious to the participants in this historical event."[71]

No doubt, the Jewish emigration from the USSR ushered in a great historical shift. The beginning of the Exodus drew a line under an epoch lasting two centuries of coerced co-existence between Jews and Russians. From that point every Soviet Jew was free to choose for himself — to live in Russia or outside it. By the second half of the 1980s each was entirely free to leave for Israel without struggle.

The events that took place over two centuries of Jewish life in Russia – the Pale of Settlement,the escape from its stultifying confines, the flowering, the ascension to the ruling circles of Russia, then the new constraints, and finally the Exodus – none of these are random streams on the outskirts of history. Jewry had completed its spread from its origin on the Mediterranean Sea to as far away as Eastern Europe, and it was now returning back to its point of origin.

We can see in both this spread and in its reversal a supra-human design. Perhaps those that come after us will have the opportunity to see it more clearly and to solve its mystery.

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Chapter 27: About the assimilation. Author's afterword

When and how did this extraordinary Jewish status of "guests everywhere" begin? The conventional wisdom suggests that the centuries-old Jewish diaspora should be dated from the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in AD70; and that, after being thrown out of their native land, the Jews began wandering around the world. However, it is not true because "the great majority of the Jews were already dispersed by that time; hardly more than one-eighth of the nation lived in Palestine."[1] The Jewish Diaspora had begun much earlier: "The Jews were mainly a dispersed nation by the time of the Babylonian captivity [6th century B.C.] and, possibly, even earlier; Palestine was only a religious and, to certain extent, a cultural center."[2]

Scattering of the Jews was already foretold in the Pentateuch. "I will scatter you among the nations" (Leviticus 26:33). "Yahweh will scatter you among the peoples, and you shall be left few in number among the nations" (Deuteronomy 4:27).

"Only a small part of the Jews had returned from the [Babylonian] captivity; many had remained in Babylon as they did not want to abandon their property." Large settlements were established outside of Palestine; "large numbers of Jews concentrated … in major trade and industrial centers of the ancient world." (For example, in Alexandria under Ptolemaic dynasty, Jews accounted for two-fifth of the population.) "They were, mainly, traders and craftsmen."[3] The Jewish-Hellenistic philosopher Philo Judaeus (who died in the middle of the 1st century, 20 years before the destruction of the Temple) states: "[The Jews] regard the Holy City as their metropolis because the Holy Temple of Almighty God is situated there, and they call "homeland" the countries where they live, and where their fathers, grandfathers, great-grandfathers and ancient forebears lived, and where they were born and brought up."[4]

Mikhail Gershenzon mused on the fates of the Jewish nation after the Babylonian captivity: "[The Jews] took roots in foreign lands and, contrary to expectations, didn't aspire to return to their old homeland." "Just recall: the Kingdom of Judah was still there, yet most of the Jews were already scattered across the whole Middle East; the Second Temple still stood in all its splendor, but the Language of the Bible was no longer heard on the streets and in the houses of Jerusalem; everybody spoke either Syrian or Greek there." Even back then the Jews were inclined to think: "We should not hold dear our national independence, we should learn to live without it, under foreign rule; we should not become attached to a land or to a single language."[5]

Modern Jewish authors agree: "The Jews in the ancient world were scattered and established large centers in the Diaspora even before the collapse of Jewish nationhood."[6] "The nation which was given the Law did not want to return to its native country. There is

some very profound and still not understood meaning in it. It is much easier to chat about Jewish values and about the preservation of Jewry than to explain the true reasons for such a long Galut."[7] (Even in the mid-20th century the Hebrew language still had no word for "Diaspora" as for the living in the voluntary scattering, there was only "Galut," referring to the forced exile.)

From the historical evidence we see that the scattering of the Jews was not solely their unfortunate fate, but also a voluntary quest. Indeed, it was a bemoaned disaster, but could it also be a method of making life easier? This is an important question in attempting to understand the Diaspora.

The Jews still do not have a generally accepted view on the Diaspora, whether it has been blessing for them or a bane.

Zionism, from the very moment of its birth, responded to this question firmly (and fully in line with its essence): "Our scattering is our biggest curse; it brings us no good, and no advantages and no peace to others as well…. We are guests everywhere … and we are still unwanted, everybody wants to get rid of us."[8] "To be a homeless man, feeling as a guest everywhere — this is the true curse of exile, its real bitterness!"[9] "Some say that having several 'homes' improves chances to survive for the Jews. In my view, a nation staying in many other's homes and not caring about its own cannot expect security. The availability of many homes corrupts."[10]

Yet the opposite opinion is even more prevalent, and it seems to be more credible. "Perhaps, the Jewish nation had survived and persevered not in spite of its exile, but because of it; the Jewish Diaspora is not an episode, but the organic 'ingredient' of Jewish history."[11]

"Was the Jewish nation preserved in all its uniqueness in spite of the exile and scattering or because of it? The tragedy of Jerusalem in AD70 destroyed the state, yet it was necessary to save the people"; "the extraordinarily intensified instinct of national self-preservation" prompted Jews toward salvation through Diaspora."[12] "Jewry was never able to fully comprehend its situation and the causes for it. They saw exile as the punishment for their sins, yet time and time again it turned out to be the dispensation by which the Lord has distinguished his nation. Through the Diaspora, the Jew worked out the mark of the Chosen he foresaw on his brow…. The scattered state of the nation is not unnatural for him…. Already in the periods of the most comfortable existence in their own state, Jewry was stationing garrisons on its route and spearheading vanguards in all directions, as if sensing its future dispersion and getting ready to retreat to the positions it had prepared in advance." "Thus, the Diaspora is a special form of Jewish existence in space and time of this world."[13] And look how awesomely mobile are the Jews in Diaspora. "The Jewish people never strike root in one place, even after several generations."[14]

But after they were so widely scattered and had become small minorities among other nations, the Jews had to develop a clear position toward those nations — how to behave

among them and how to relate to them, to seek ultimate bonding and merging with those nations, or to reject them and separate from them? The Holy Scripture contains quite a few covenants of isolation. The Jews avoided even their closest kindred neighbors, the Samaritans and Israelites, so irreconcilably that it was not permitted to even take a piece of bread from them. Mixed marriages were very strictly forbidden. "We will not give our daughters to the peoples of the land or take their daughters for our sons." (Nehemiah 10:30) And Ezra had ordered them to dissolve even the existing marriages, even those with children.

Thus, living in Diaspora for thousands of years, the Jews did not mix with other nations, just as butter does not mix with water, but comes to the surface and floats. During all those long centuries, they perceived themselves as something distinct, and until the 18th century "the Jews as a nation have never shown any inclination for assimilation." The pre-revolutionary Jewish Encyclopedia, while quoting Marx's assertion that "the Jews had not assimilated, because they represented the highest economic class, that is the class of capitalists amidst the agricultural and petty bourgeois nations," objects, saying that the economy was secondary: "the Jews of the Diaspora have consciously established their own economy which protected them from assimilation. They did it because they were conscious of their cultural superiority," which, for its part, was created by "the spiritual meaning of Judaism in its most complete form. The latter protected them from imitation."[15]

But "from the mid-18th century the Jews started to believe in assimilation, and that becomes … the ferment of decomposition of the Jewish nation in Western Europe of the 19th century." Assimilation begins when "the surrounding culture reaches the height held by the Jewish culture, or when the Jewry ceases to create new values." The national will of the European Jews was weakened by the end of the 18th century; it had lost ground because of extremely long waiting. Other nations began creating brilliant cultures that eclipsed Jewish culture."[16] And exactly then Napoleon launched the Pan-European emancipation; in one country after another, the roads to social equality were opening before the Jews, and that facilitated assimilation. (There is an important caveat here: "There is no unilateral assimilation," and "the assimilating Jews supplemented the host cultures with Jewish national traits." Heine and Börne, Ricardo and Marx, Beaconsfield-Disraeli and Lassalle, Meyerbeer and Mendelssohn — "during their assimilation into the host cultures, they added Jewish elements to them."[17])

In some cases, assimilation leads to a brighter creative personal self-fulfillment. But, overall, "assimilation was the price paid by the Jews for the benefit of having access to the European culture. Educated Jews convinced themselves that "the Jews are not a nation, but only a religious group."[18] "The Jewish nation, after it joined the realm of European nations, began to lose its national uniqueness … only the Jew from the ghetto retained pronounced national traits … while the intelligent Jew tried with all his strength to look unlike a typical Jew." Thus spread "the theory that there is no Jewish nation, but only 'the Poles, Frenchmen and Germans of Mosaic Law.'"[19]

Marx, and then Lenin saw the solution of Jewish question in the full assimilation of the Jews in the countries of their residence.

In contrast to the clumsiness of those ideologues, the ideas of M.O. Gershenzon are much more interesting. He put them forward late in life, in 1920, and they are all the more interesting because the lofty thinker Gershenzon was a completely assimilated Russian Jew. Nevertheless, the Jewish question was alive and well in his mind. He explored it in his article The Destinies of the Jewish Nation.

Unlike the contemporary Jewish Encyclopedia, Gershenzon believes that Jewish assimilation is the ancient phenomenon, from time immemorial. One voice constantly "tempted him [the Jew] to blend with the environment — hence comes this ineradicable and ancient Jewish aspiration to assimilate." Yet another voice "demanded above all things to preserve his national uniqueness. The whole story of scattering is the never-ending struggle of two wills within Jewry: the human will against the superhuman one, the individual against the collective…. The requirements of the national will towards the individual were so ruthless and almost beyond human power, that without having a great hope common to all Jewry, the Jew would succumb to despair every now and then, and would be tempted to fall away from his brethren and desert that strange and painful common cause." Contrary to the view that it is not difficult to explain why assimilation began precisely at the end of the 18th century, Gershenzon is rather surprised: "Is it not strange that assimilation so unexpectedly accelerated exactly during the last one hundred years and it continues to intensify with each passing hour? Shouldn't the temptation to fall apart be diminished greatly nowadays, when the Jews obtained equal rights everywhere?" No, he replies: "It is not the external force that splits the Jews; Jewry disintegrates from the inside. The main pillar of Jewry, the religious unity of the Jewish nation, is decayed and rotten." So, what about assimilation, where does it lead to? "At first sight, it appears that … [the Jews] are imbued, to the marrow of their bones, with the cosmopolitan spirit or, at least, with the spirit of the local culture; they share beliefs and fixations of the people around them." Yet it is not exactly like that: "They love the same things, but not in the same way…. They indeed crave to embrace the alien gods… They strive to accept the way of life of modern culture…. They pretend that they already love all that — truly love, and they are even able to convince themselves of that." Alas! One can only love his own faith, "the one born in the throes from the depths of the soul."[20]

Jewish authors genuinely express the spiritual torment experienced by the assimilating Jew. "If you decided to pretend that you are not a Jew, or to change your religion, you are doomed to unending internal struggle with your Jewish identity…. You live in terrible tension…. In a way, this is immoral, a sort of spiritual self-violation."[21] (This inner conflict was amazingly described by Chekhov in his essay Tumbleweed.) "This evil stepmother — assimilation … forced the individual to adapt to everything: to the meaning of life and human relations, to demands and needs, to the way of life and habits. It crippled the psychology of the nation in general and … that of the national intelligentsia in particular." It compelled

people “to renounce their own identity, and, ultimately, led to self-destruction.”[22] “It is a painful and humiliating search of identity.”[23] But even “the most complete assimilation is ephemeral: it never becomes natural,” it does not liberate “from the need to be on guard” all the time.[24]

In addition to the lack of trust on the part of surrounding native people, assimilating Jews come under fire from their fellow Jews; they are accused of “consumerism and conformism,” of “the desire to desert their people, to dispose of their Jewish identity,” and of “the national defection.”[25]

Nevertheless, during the 19th century everything indicated that assimilation was feasible and necessary, that it was predetermined and even inevitable. Yet the emergence of Zionism cast a completely new light on this problem. Before Zionism, “every Jew suffered from painful duality,“[26] the dissonance between the religious tradition and the surrounding external world.

In the early 20th century Jabotinsky wrote: “When the Jew adopts a foreign culture … one should not trust the depth and strength of such conversion. The assimilated Jew cannot withstand a single onslaught, he abandons the ‘adopted’ culture without any resistance whatsoever, as soon as he sees that the power of that culture is over … he cannot be the pillar for such a culture.” He provided a shining example of the Germanized Austria-Hungary, when, with the growth of Czech, Hungarian and Polish cultures, Germanized Jews actively conformed to new ways of life. “It is all about certain hard realities of the natural relationship between a man and his culture, the culture created by his ancestors.”[27] This observation is true, of course, though “hard realities” sounds somewhat dry. (Jabotinsky not only objected to assimilation fiercely, he also insistently warned the Jews to avoid Russian politics, literature and art, cautioning that after a while the Russians would inevitably turn down such service.[28])

Many individual and collective examples, both in Europe and Russia, in the past and nowadays, illustrate the fragility of Jewish assimilation.

Consider Benjamin Disraeli, the son of a non-religious father; he was baptized in adolescence and he did not just display the English way of life, he became no less than the symbol of the British Empire. So, what did he dream about at leisure, while riding his novel-writing hobby-horse? He wrote about exceptional merits and Messianism of the Jews, expressed his ardent love to Palestine, and dreamt of restoring the Israeli homeland![29]

And what’s about Gershenzon? He was a prominent historian of Russian culture and an expert on Pushkin. He was even criticized for his “Slavophilism.” But, nevertheless, at the end of his life, he wrote: “Accustomed to European culture from a tender age, I deeply imbibed its spirit … and I truly love many things in it…. But deep in my mind I live differently. For many years a secret voice from within appeals to me persistently and incessantly: This is not yours! This is not yours! A strange will inside me sorrowfully turns away from [Russian]

culture, from everything happening and spoken around me…. I live like a stranger who has adapted to a foreign country; the natives love me, and I love them too; I zealously work for their benefit … yet I feel I am a stranger, and I secretly yearn for the fields of my homeland."[30]

After this confession of Gershenzon, it is appropriate to formulate the key thesis of this chapter. There are different types of assimilation: civil and domestic assimilation, when the assimilated individual is completely immersed in the surrounding life and accepts the interests of the native nation (in that sense, the overwhelming majority of Russian, European and American Jews would perhaps consider themselves assimilated); cultural assimilation; and, at the extreme, spiritual assimilation, which also happens, albeit rarely. The latter is more complex and does not result from the former two types of assimilation. (In the opinion of a critic, The Correspondence between Two Corners by Vyacheslav Ivanov and M.O. Gershenzon, that "small book of tremendous importance", serves as "a proof of the inadequacy of Jewish assimilation, even in the case of apparently complete cultural assimilation."[31])

Or take another individual, [M. Krol], a revolutionary in his youth and a "converted" émigré after the revolution, he marvels that the Russian Jews even in their new countries of emigration demonstrated "a huge amount of national energy" and were building an "original Jewish culture" there. Even in London the Jews had their own Yiddish schools, their own social organizations, and their own solid economics; they did not merge with the English way of life, but only accommodated to its demands and reinforced the original English Jewry. (The latter even had their own British Council of Jews, and called themselves the "Jewish community of the Great Britain" — note that all this was in England, where Jewish assimilation was considered all but complete.) He witnessed the same thing in France, and was particularly impressed by the similar "feat" in the United States.[32]

And there is also that unfailing and reliable Jewish mutual support, that truly outstanding ability that preserves the Jewish people. Yet it further weakens the stability of assimilation.

It was not only the rise of Zionism that prompted the Jews to reject assimilation. The very course of the 20th century was not conductive to assimilation.

On the eve of World War II in 1939, a true Zionist, Max Brod, wrote: "It was possible to argue in support of the theory of assimilation in the days of far less advanced statehood of the 19th century," but "this theory lost any meaning in the era when the peoples increasingly consolidate"; "we, the Jews, will be inevitably crushed by bellicose nationalistic peoples, unless we take our fate into our hands and retreat in time."[33]

Martin Buber had a very stern opinion on this in 1941: "So far, our existence had served only to shake the thrones of idols, but not to erect the throne of God. This is exactly why our existence among other nations is so mysterious. We purport to teach others about the absolute, but in reality we just say 'no' to other nations, or, perhaps, we are actually nothing

more than just the embodiment of such negation. This is why we have turned into the nightmare of the nations."[34]

Then, two deep furrows, the Catastrophe and the emergence of Israel soon afterwards, crossed the course of Jewish history, shedding new and very bright light on the problem of assimilation.

Arthur Koestler clearly formulated and expressed his thoughts on the significance of the state of Israel for world Jewry in his book Promise and Fulfillment: Palestine 1917-1949 and in an article, Judah at the Crossroads.

An ardent Zionist in his youth, Koestler left Vienna for a Palestinian kibbutz in 1926; he worked for a few years in Jerusalem as a Hebrew-writing columnist for Jabotinsky's newspaper; he also reported for several German newspapers. And then he wrote: "If we exclude from the Jewish religion the mystical craving for the Promised Land, then the very basis and essence of this religion would disappear." And further, "after the restoration of the Jewish state, most of the Jewish prayers, rites and symbols lost their meaning…. The God of Israel has abided by the treaty; he had returned the land of Canaan to Abraham's seed…. If, however, [the religious Jew] defies the order to return to the land of his ancestors and thus violates the treaty, he consequently … anathematizes himself and loses his Jewishness." On the other hand, it may be difficult for not very religious Jews to understand why they should make sacrifices to preserve "Jewish values" not included in the religious doctrine. "The [Jewish] religion loses any sense if you continue to pray about the return to Zion even after you have grimly determined not to go there." A painful choice, yes, but "the choice that must be made immediately, for the sake of the next generation…. Do I want to move to Israel? If I do not, then what right do I have to continue calling myself a Jew and thus to mark my children with the stigma of isolation? The whole world would sincerely welcome the assimilation of the Jews," and after three generations or so, "the Jewish question would fade away."[35]

The London newspaper Jewish Chronicle objected to Koestler: perhaps, "it is much better, much more reasonable and proper for a Jew from the Diaspora to live as before, at the same time helping to build the State of Israel?" Yet Koestler remained adamant: "They want both to have their cake and eat it. This is the route to disaster."[36]

Yet all previous attempts at assimilation ended in failure; so why it should be different this time? — argued the newspaper. Koestler replied: "Because all previous attempts of assimilation were based on the wrong assumption that the Jews could be adequate sons of the host nation, while at the same time preserving their religion and remaining 'the Chosen people.'" But "ethnic assimilation is impossible if Judaism is preserved; and conversely Judaism collapses in case of ethnic assimilation. Jewish religion perpetuates the national isolation — there is nothing you can do about this fact." Therefore, "before the restoration of Israel, the renunciation of one's Jewish identity was equivalent to refusal to support the

persecuted and could be regarded as a cowardly surrender." But "now, we are talking not about surrender, but about a free choice."[37]

Thus, Koestler offered a tough choice to the Diaspora Jews: "to become Israelis or to stop being Jews. He himself took the latter path."[38] (Needless to say, Jews in the Diaspora met Koestler's conclusions mainly with angry criticism.)

Yet those who had chosen the first option, the citizens of the State of Israel, obtained a new support and, from that, a new view at this eternal problem. For instance, a modern Israeli author writes sharply: "The Galut Jew is an immoral creature. He uses all the benefits of his host country but at the same time he does not fully identify with it. These people demand the status which no other nation in the world has — to be allowed to have two homelands: the one, where they currently live, and another one, where 'their heart lives.' And after that they still wonder why they are hated!"[39]

And they do wonder a lot: "Why, why are the Jews so disliked (true, the Jews are disliked, this is fact; otherwise, why strive for liberation?)? And from what? Apparently, not from our Jewishness…." "We know very well that we should liberate ourselves, it is absolutely necessary, though … we still cannot tell exactly what from."[40]

A natural question — what should we do to be loved — is seldom asked. Jewish authors usually see the whole world as hostile to them, and so they give way to grief: "The world is now split into those who sympathize with the Jewish people, and those seeking to destroy the Jewish people."[41] Sometimes, there is proud despair: "It is humiliating to rely on the authorities for the protection from the nation which dislikes you; it is humiliating to thank ingratiatingly the best and worthiest of this nation, who put in a good word for you."[42]

Another Israeli disagrees: "In reality, this world is not solely divided on the grounds of one's attitude toward Jews, as we sometimes think owing to our excessive sensitivity." A. Voronel agrees: "The Jews pay too much attention to anti-Semites, and too little — to themselves."[43]

Israel, the Jewish state, must become the center that secures the future of world Jewry. As early as in the 1920s no other than Albert Einstein wrote to no other than Pyotr Rutenberg, a former Social Revolutionary and possibly the main author of the revolutionary demands of January 9, 1905 (he accompanied Orthodox Father Gapon during the workers' procession on that date but was later one of his executioners; still later, Rutenberg left Russia to rebuild Palestine): "First of all, your [Palestinian settlers'] lives must be protected, because you sacrifice yourselves for the sake of the Spirit and in the name the entire Jewish nation. We must demonstrate that we are a nation with the will to live and that we are strong enough for the great accomplishment that would consolidate our people and protect our future generations. For us and for our posterity, the State must become as precious as the Temple was for our ancestors."[44]

Jewish authors support this conviction in many ways: “The Jewish problem, apparently, has no reliable solution without the Jewish state.”[45] ”Israel is the center that guarantees the future of the Jews of the whole world.”[46] Israel is the only correct place for Jews, one where their “historical activity does not result in historical fiasco.”[47]

And only a rumble coming from that tiny and endlessly beleaguered country betrays “the phantom of the Catastrophe, permanently imprinted in the collective unconscious of the Israelis.”[48]

* * *

And what is the status of assimilation, the Diaspora, and Israel today?

By the 1990s, assimilation had advanced very far. For example, “for 80-90% of the American Jews, the modern tendencies of the Jewish life promise gradual assimilation.” This holds true not only for the United States: “Jewish life gradually disappears from most of the Diaspora communities.” Most modern-day Jews “do not have painful memories of the Catastrophe…. They identify with Israel much less than their parents.” Doubtlessly, “the role of the Diaspora is shrinking disastrously, and this is fraught with inevitable loss of its essential characteristics.” “Will our grandchildren remain Jews…? Will the Diaspora survive the end of this millennium and, if so, for how long? Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz, one of the greatest teachers of our time … warns that the Jews of the Diaspora are no longer a group, ‘whose survival is guaranteed by being in jeopardy.’” And because of that, they, paradoxically, “are already on the road to extinction, participating in the ‘Catastrophe of self-destruction.’” Moreover, “anti-Semitism in Western countries cannot be anymore considered as the element that strengthens Jewish identity. Anti-Semitic discrimination in politics, business, universities, private clubs, etc. is for all practical purposes eliminated.”[49] In present-day Europe “there are many Jews who do not identify as Jews and who react idiosyncratically to any attempt to connect them with that artificial community.” “The assimilated Jew does not want to feel like a Jew; he casts away the traits of his race (according to Sartre).”[50] The same author offers a scorching assessment: “European Jews reject their Jewishness; they think it is anti-Semitism that compels them to be the Jews. Yet that is a contradiction: A Jew identifies as a Jew only when he is in danger. Then he escapes as a Jew. But when he himself becomes the source of danger, he is not a Jew.”[51]

Thus, “the contours of the collapse of the Diaspora take shape exactly when the Western Jews enjoy freedom and wealth unprecedented in Jewish history, and when they are, or appear to be, stronger than ever.” And “if the current trends do not change, most of the Diaspora will simply disappear. We have to admit a real possibility of the humiliating, though voluntary, gradual degradation of the Diaspora…. Arthur Koestler, the advocate of assimilation, who in the 1950s predicted the death of the Diaspora, might prove to be right after all.”[52]

Meanwhile, “the Jews of the world, sometimes even to their own surprise, feel like they are personally involved in the destiny of Israel.” “If, God forbid, Israel is destroyed, then the Jews in other countries will disappear too. I cannot explain why, but the Jews will not survive the second Catastrophe in this century.”[53] Another author attributes the “Jewish mythology of the imminent Catastrophe” precisely to life in the Diaspora, and this is why “American (and Soviet) Jews often express such opinions.” They prepare for the Catastrophe: should Israel fall, it will be they who will carry on the Jewish nation.[54] Thus, “almost all of many hypotheses attempting to explain the purpose of Jewish Diaspora … recognize that it makes Jewry nearly indestructible; it guarantees Jewry eternal life within the limits of the existence of mankind.”[55]

We also encounter quite a bellicose defense of the principle of Diaspora. American professor Leonard Fayne said: “We oppose the historical demand to make aliyah. We do not feel like we are in exile.” In June 1994 “the President of the World Jewish Congress, Shoshana S. Cardin, aggressively announced to the Israelis: ‘We are not going to become the forage for aliyah to Israel, and we doubt you have any idea about the richness and harmony of American Jewish life.’”[56] Others state: “We are interesting for the peoples of the world not because of peculiarities of our statehood, but because of our Diaspora which is widely recognized as one of the greatest wonders of world history.”[57] Others are rather ironic: “One rogue came up with … the elegant excuse that the “choseness” of the Jews is allegedly nothing else but to be eternally scattered.”[58] “The miracle of the restoration of Israel post factum gave new meaning to the Diaspora; simultaneously, it had brilliantly concluded the story that could otherwise drag on. In short, it had crowned the miracle of the Diaspora. It crowned it, but did not abolish it.”[59] Yet “it is ironic too, as the goals for which we struggled so hard and which filled us with such pride and feeling of difference, are already achieved.”[60]

Understanding the fate of the Diaspora and any successful prediction of its future largely depends on the issue of mixed marriages. Intermarriage is the most powerful and irreversible mechanism of assimilation. (It is no accident that such unions are so absolutely forbidden in the Old Testament: “They have dealt faithlessly with the Lord; for they have borne alien children.” (Hosea 5:7)) When Arnold J. Toynbee proposed intermarriage as a means to fight anti-Semitism, hundreds of rabbis opposed him: “Mass mixed marriage means the end of Jewry.”[61]

A dramatic growth of mixed marriages is observed in the Western countries: “Data documenting the statistics of ‘dissolution’ are chilling. In the 1960s ‘mixed marriages’ accounted for approximately 6% of Jewish marriages in the United States, the home of the largest Jewish community in the world. Today [in 1990s], only one generation later, this number reached 60% — a ten-fold increase. The share of ‘mixed marriages’ in Europe and Latin America is approximately the same…. Moreover, apart from the orthodox Jews, almost all Jewish families in Western countries have an extremely low birth rate.” In addition, “only

a small minority of children from 'mixed families' are willing to adopt a distinctly Jewish way of life."[62]

And what about Russia? The Shorter Jewish Encyclopedia provides the following statistics: in 1988 [still under the Soviet regime], in the RSFSR (Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic), 73% of married Jewish men, and 63% of married Jewish women had non-Jewish spouses (in 1978 these numbers were lower: 13% for men, and 20% for women.). "Actually, Jews in such marriages tend to lose their Jewish self-consciousness much faster; they more often identify themselves with other nationalities during census."[63]

Thus, almost everywhere, to a greater or lesser degree, we have the "erosion of Jewish life," "dilution of racial, religious and ethnic borders that, until recently, served as the barriers for assimilation and `intermarriage.´" Today, "when common anti-Semitism declined so abruptly, … the Jews have lost a many great principles that in past used to be strong pillars of self-identification."[64]

The Jews of the Diaspora are often attacked by the Israelis. Thirty and forty years after the creation of the State of Israel, the Israelis ask Diaspora Jews mockingly and sometimes angrily: "So, what about modern Jews? Most likely, they will always remain in their true historical home, in the Galuth."[65] "The Algerian Jews had preferred France to Israel, and then the majority of the Iranian Jews, who left Khomeini's rule, gave a wide berth to Israel." "By pulling up stakes, they search for countries with higher standards of living, and a higher level of civilization. The love of Zion is not sufficient in itself."[66] "The eternal image of a classical 'imminent catastrophe' does not attract the Jews to Israel anymore."[67] "The Jews are a nation corrupted by their stateless and ahistoric existence."[68] "The Jews did not pass the test. They still do not want to return to their homeland. They prefer to stay in Galut and complain about anti-Semitism every time they are criticized…. And nobody may say a bad word about Israel, because to criticize Israel is 'anti-Semitism!' If they are so concerned about Israel, why do they not move here to live? But no, this is exactly what they try to avoid!"[69] "Most of the Jews of the world have already decided that they do not want to be independent…. Look at the Russian Jews. Some of them wanted independence, while others preferred to continue the life of a mite on the Russian dog. And when the Russian dog had become somewhat sick and angry, they have turned to the American dog. After all, the Jews lived that way for two thousand years."[70]

And now, the the Diaspora Jew "is often nervous when confronted by an Israeli; he would rather feel guilty than … share his fate with Israel. This sense of inferiority is compensated by intensely maintaining his Jewish identity … through deliberate over-emphasizing of petty Jewish symbolism." At the same time, "the Jew from the Diaspora alone shoulders the specific risk of confronting surrounding anti-Semitism." Yet, "no matter how the Israel behaves, the Diaspora has no choice: it will quietly stand behind the Israelis like an unloved but faithful wife."[71]

It was forecasted that "by 2021, the Diaspora will probably shrink by another million souls." "The interior workings of Jewish history… indicate that, most likely, the size of world Jewry will further decrease with the gradual concentration of a Jewish majority in Zion and not in the Diaspora."[72]

Yet couldn't it be the other way around? Maybe, after all, the Russian Jew Josef Bikerman was right when he confidently claimed that the Diaspora is indestructible? "I accept Galut, where we have lived for two thousand years, where we have developed strong cohesion, and where we must live henceforth, to live and prove ourselves."[73] Could it be that those two voices which, according to Gershenzon, always sound in Jewish ears — one calling to mix with the surroundings, and another demanding to preserve Jewish national uniqueness, — will sound forever?

A reputable historian noted (after World War II) "a paradox in the life of modern Jewry: ever-growing immersion of Jews in the life of other nations does not diminish their national identity and sometimes even intensifies it."[74]

Below are few testimonies made by Russian Jews during the Soviet ("internationalist") period.

"I always had an acute perception of my Jewishness…. From the age of 17, when I left the cradle of high school, I mixed in circles where the Jewish question was central." "My father had a very strong Jewish spirit; despite that, he never observed traditions, Mitzvoth, did not know the language, and yet … everything, that he, a Jew, knew, was somehow subordinated to his Jewish identity."[75]

A writer from Odessa, Arkady Lvov, remembers: "When I was a 10-year old boy, I searched for the Jews among scientists, writers, politicians, and first of all, as a Young Pioneer [a communist youth group in the former Soviet Union], I looked for them among the members of government." Lazar Kaganovich was in third place, ahead of Voroshilov and Kalinin, "and I was proud of Stalin's minister Kaganovich… I was proud of Sverdlov, I was proud of Uritsky… And I was proud of Trotsky — yes, yes, of Trotsky!" He thought that Ostermann (the adviser of Peter the Great) was a Jew, and when he found that Ostermann actually was German, he had "a feeling of disappointment, a feeling of loss," but he "was openly proud that Shafirov was a Jew."[76]

Yet there were many Jews in Russia who were not afraid "to merge with the bulk of the assimilating body,"[77] who devotedly espoused Russian culture:

"In the old days, only a handful of Jews experienced this: Antokolsky, Levitan, Rubinstein, and a few others. Later there were more of them. Oh, they've fathomed Russia so deeply with their ancient and refined intuition of heart and mind! They've perceived her shimmering, her enigmatic play of light and darkness, her struggles and sufferings. Russia attracted their hearts with her dramatic fight between good and evil, with her

thunderstorms and weaknesses, with her strengths and charms. But several decades ago, not a mere handful, but thousands Jews entered Russian culture…. And many of them began to identify sincerely as Russians in their souls, thoughts, tastes and habits…. Yet there is still something in the Jewish soul … a sound, a dissonance, a small crack — something very small, but through it, eventually, distrust, mockery and hostility leaks from the outside, while from the inside some ancient memory works away.

So who am I? Who am I? Am I Russian?

No, no. I am a Russian Jew."[78]

Indeed, assimilation apparently has some insurmountable limits. That explains the difference between full spiritual assimilation and cultural assimilation, and all the more so, between the former and widespread civic and social assimilation. Jews — fatefully for Jewry — preserve their identity despite all outward signs of successful assimilation, they preserve "the inner Jewish character" (Solomon Lurie).

The wish to fully merge with the rest of mankind, in spite of all strict barriers of the Law seems natural and vivid. But is it possible? Even in the 20th century some Jews believed that "the unification of the mankind is the ideal of Judaic Messianism."[79] But is it really so? Did such an ideal ever exist?

Far more often, we hear vigorous objections to it: "Nobody will convince or compel me to renounce my Jewish point of view, or to sacrifice my Jewish interests for the sake of some universal idea, be it 'proletarian internationalism,' (the one we idiots believed in the 1920s) or 'Great Russia,' or 'the triumph of Christianity,' or 'the benefit of all mankind,' and so on."[80]

Nearly assimilated non-Zionist and non-religious Jewish intellectuals often demonstrate a totally different attitude. For instance, one highly educated woman with broad political interests, T.M.L., imparted to me in Moscow in 1967 that "it would be horrible to live in an entirely Jewish milieu. The most precious trait of our nation is cosmopolitanism. It would be horrible if all Jews would gather in one militarist state. It is totally incomprehensible for assimilated Jews." I objected timidly: "But it cannot be a problem for the assimilated Jews as they are not Jews anymore." She replied: "No, we still have some [Jewish] genes in us."

Yet it is not about the fatality of origin, blood or genes, it is about which pain — Jewish pain or that of the host nation — is closer to one's heart. "Alas, nationality is more than just knowledge of language, or an introduction to the culture, or even an attachment to the nature and way of life of the country. There is another dimension in it — that of the commonality of historic destiny, determined for each individual by his involvement in the history and destiny of his own people. While for others this involvement is predetermined by birth, for the Jew it is largely a question of personal choice, that of a hard choice."[81]

So far, assimilation has not been very convincing. All those who proposed various ways for universal assimilation have failed. The difficult problem of assimilation persists. And though on a global scale the process of assimilation has advanced very far, it by no means foredooms the Diaspora.

“Even Soviet life could not produce a fully assimilated Jew, the one who would be assimilated at the deepest, psychological level.”[82] And, as a Jewish author concludes, “Wherever you look, you will find insoluble Jewish residue in the assimilated liquid.”[83]

Yet individual cases of deep assimilation with bright life histories do occur. And we in Russia welcome them wholeheartedly.

* * *

“A Russian Jew … A Jew, a Russian…. So much blood and tears have been shed around this boundary, so much unspeakable torment with no end in sight piled up. Yet, at the same time, we have also witnessed much joy of spiritual and cultural growth…. There were and still are numerous Jews who decide to shoulder that heavy cross: to be a Russian Jew, and at the same time, a Russian. Two affections, two passions, two struggles…. Isn’t it too much for one heart? Yes, it is too much. But this is exactly where the fatal tragedy of this dual identity is. Dual identity is not really an identity. The balance here is not an innate but rather an acquired entity.”[84] That reflection on the pre-revolutionary Russia was written in 1927 in the Paris emigration.

Some fifty years later, another Jew, who lived in Soviet Russia and later emigrated to Israel, looked back and wrote: “We, the Jews who grew up in Russia, are a weird cross — the Russian Jews…. Others say that we are Jews by nationality and Russians by culture. Yet is it possible to change your culture and nationality like a garment…? When an enormous press drives one metal into another, they cannot be separated, not even by cutting. For decades we were pressed together under a huge pressure. My national identity is expressed in my culture. My culture coalesced with my nationality. Please separate one from another. I am also curious which cells of my soul are of the Russian color and which are of the Jewish one. Yet there was not only pressure, not only a forced fusion. There was also an unexpected affinity between these intercrossing origins, at some deep spiritual layers. It was as if they supplemented each other to a new completeness: like space supplements time, the spiritual breadth supplements the spiritual depth, and the acceptance supplements the negation; and there was a mutual jealousy about `choseness´. Therefore, I do not have two souls, which quarrel with each other, weaken each other, and split me in two. I have one soul … and it is not two-faced, not divided in two, and not mixed. It is just one.”[85]

And the response from Russia: “I believe that the contact of the Jewish and Slavic souls in Russia was not a coincidence; there was some purpose in it.”[86]

Author's afterword

In 1990, while finishing *April 1917* and sorting out the enormous amount of material not included in *The Red Wheel*, I decided to present some of that material in the form of a historical essay about Jews in the Russian revolution.

Yet it became clear almost immediately that in order to understand those events the essay must step back in time. Thus, it stepped back to the very first incorporation of the Jews into the Russian Empire in 1772. On the other hand, the revolution of 1917 provided a powerful impetus to Russian Jewry, so the essay naturally stretched into the post-revolutionary period. Thus, the title *Two Hundred Years Together* was born.

However, it took time for me to realize the importance of that distinct historical boundary drawn by mass emigration of the Jews from the Soviet Union that had begun in the 1970s (exactly 200 years after the Jews appeared in Russia) and which had become unrestricted by 1987. This boundary had been abolished, so that for the first time, the non-voluntary status of the Russian Jews no longer a fact: they ought not to live here anymore; Israel waits for them; all countries of the world are open to them. This clear boundary changed my intention to keep the narrative up to the mid-1990s, because the message of the book was already played out: the uniqueness of Russian-Jewish entwinement disappeared at the moment of the new Exodus.

Now, a totally new period in the history of the by-now-free Russian Jewry and its relations with the new Russia began. This period started with swift and essential changes, but it is still too early to predict its long-term outcomes and judge whether its peculiar *Russian-Jewish* character will persevere or it will be supplanted with the universal laws of the Jewish Diaspora. To follow the evolution of this new development is beyond the lifespan of this author.

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